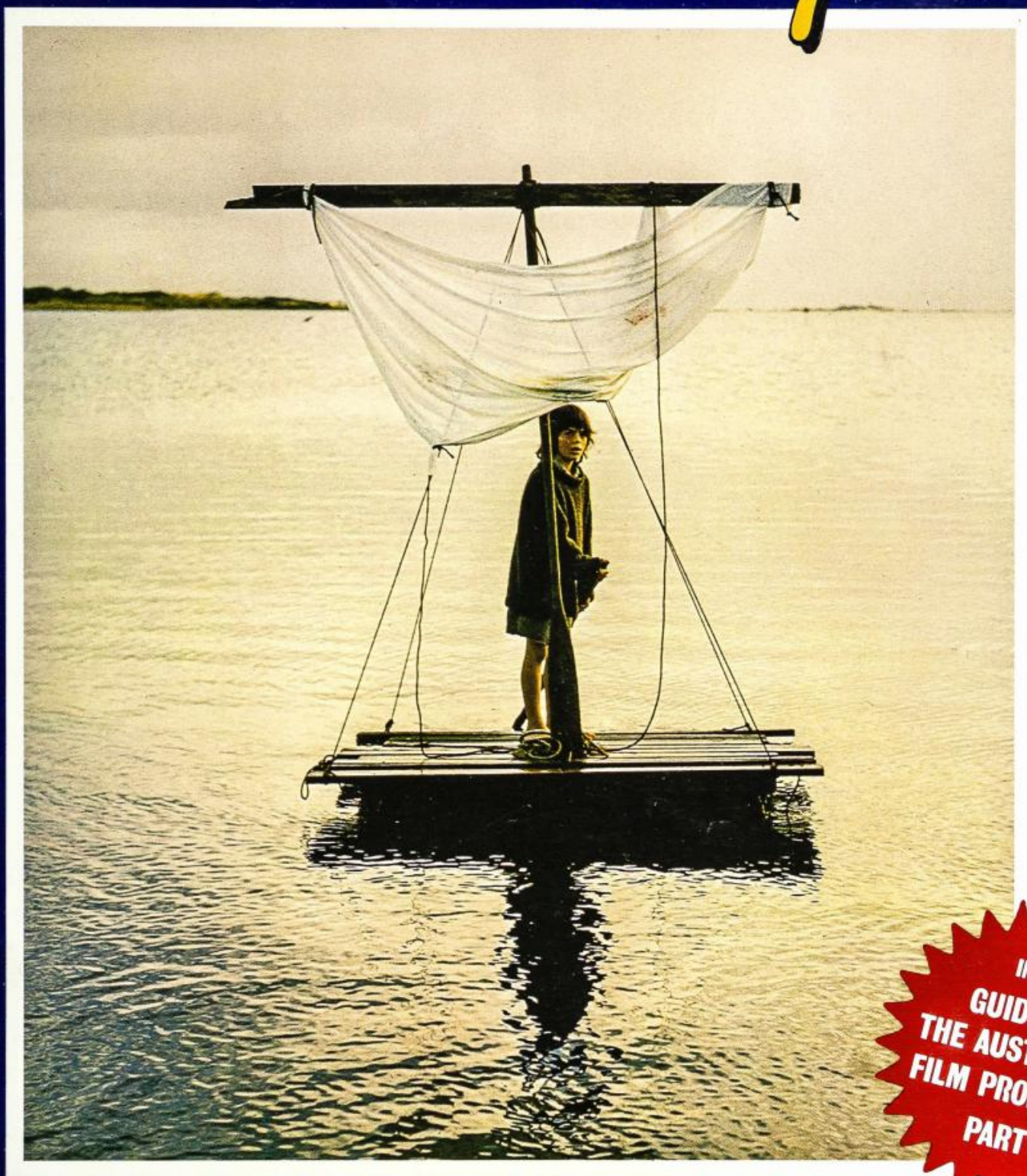


# CINEMA

## Papers



INSIDE  
GUIDE FOR  
THE AUSTRALIAN  
FILM PRODUCER:  
PART 4

**ROMAN POLANSKI - SAM ARKOFF - EMILE DE ANTONIO**  
**THE FACTS ON FILM CENSORSHIP**  
**ON LOCATION WITH THE PICTURE SHOW MAN**

JANUARY 1977

ISSUE 11 \$2.00\*





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• Florence Dugger

Written & Directed  
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MALONE**

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Directed by Peter Hunt

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**ADVANCED PRODUCTION FUND** provides assistance for projects up to a level of \$35,000. Only experienced filmmakers are eligible to apply to this fund. Projects should be innovative and should have the potential to further the applicants development as a filmmaker. This fund is open to all filmmakers, whether employed in government/commercial production or independents.

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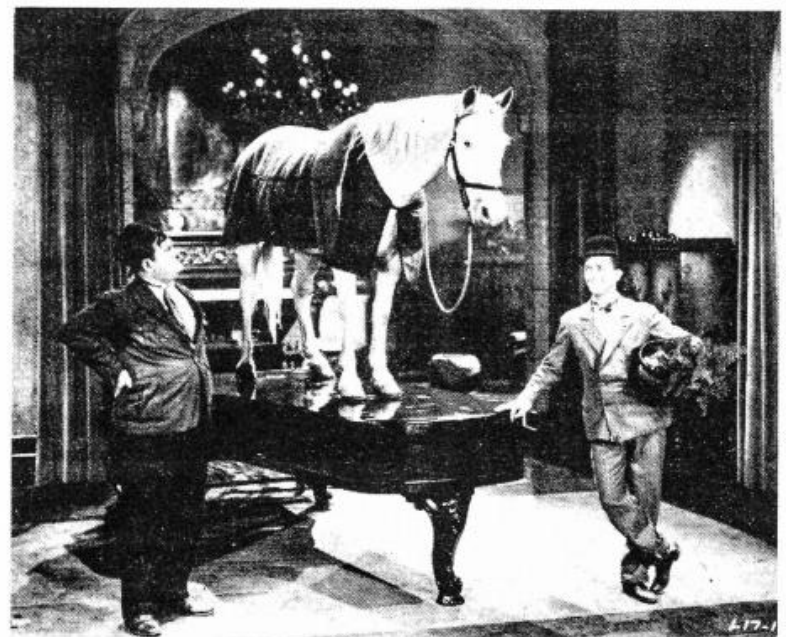


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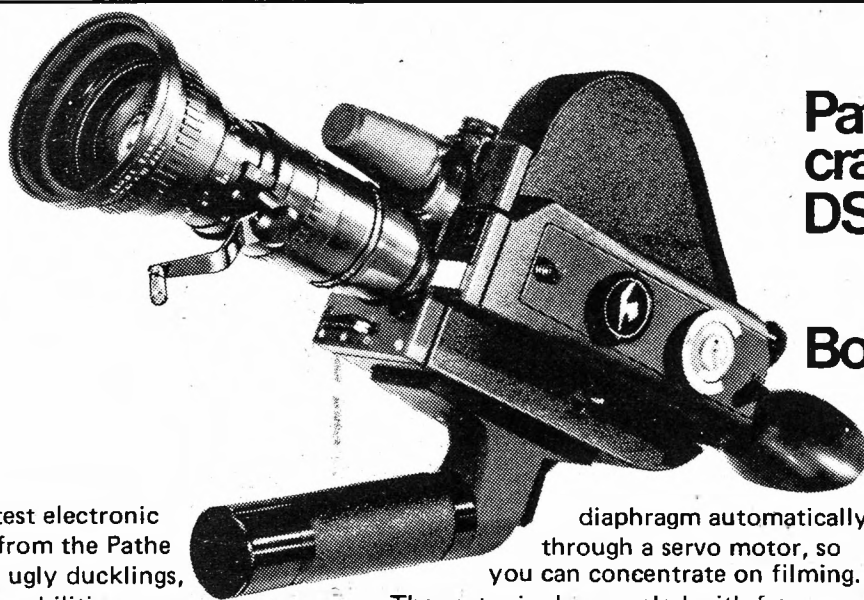
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**DEPEND ON IT**

**IT'S FROM PHOTIMPORT**



# What's new with Lachie Shaw...

*He was the Director of the Film, Radio and Television Board of the Australia Council, now he's Director of the Creative Development Branch, Australian Film Commission. He's moving his office to the Commission, but apart from that it's business as usual—Grants for Films, Alternative Cinemas, Community Radio, Video Centres, Script Development Grants. In all nothing has been changed by the move.*

“When the Government changed the A.F.C.’s Act to allow it to take on the Board’s role, we retained the words ‘experimental’ and ‘creative’ as part of the act so the A.F.C. is now empowered to continue the encouragement and the funding of experimental and creative film activity.”

“Creative development will still be my primary concern. My job is still to see that the editor who wants to produce his own film gets that chance, or the writers get their chance to develop. Let me say here that just because these functions are now with the Commission it won’t mean we will be looking at these projects for immediate commercial viability, or indeed any commercial viability. Needless to say, when something comes up which could have a commercial future then it’s only down the corridor to John Daniel’s Project Development Branch. I’m thinking of films like *Oz* and *FJ Holden*, they came to the Board first and then on to the A.F.C. for their commercial development. Maybe we can speed things up a bit now we’re all under the same roof.”



“Film and Video people are not going to be held back by the change. It’s essential that we continue an investigative role of assistance to the media’s development problems. The money end of the industry won’t have much future if we don’t continue to develop the innovative or newer talent. The Australian film industry just can’t run on a closed up, tight basis.”

Next in this series, John Daniel on Project Development.







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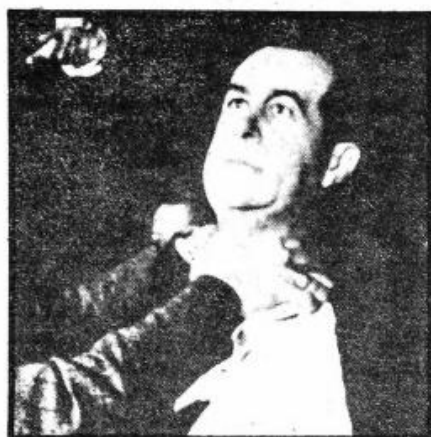




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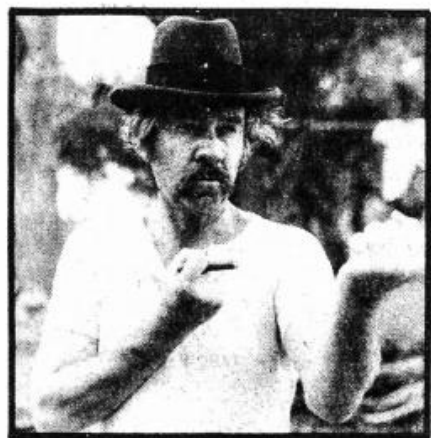
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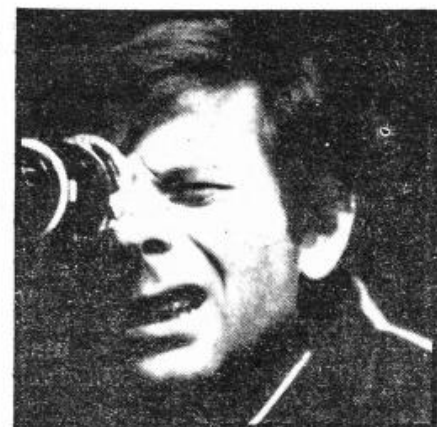


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# The Quarter

## MARKETING BREAKTHROUGH

As a result of sales drives by producers at the Cannes Film Festival in May and MIFED in October, 1976 has seen a breakthrough for the distribution of Australian films overseas.

More than 16 Australian features and 20 television productions were screened during the festivals, and a list of sales resulting from festival screenings and individual marketing initiatives by producers (represented in many cases by the marketing and distribution division of the Australian Film Corporation, headed by Alan Wardrope) follows this item.

Two features in particular made considerable impact on overseas distributors: **Mad Dog Morgan** and **Picnic at Hanging Rock**.

Cinema Shares International acquired U.S. distribution rights to Philippe Mora's **Mad Dog Morgan** for a guarantee of U.S. \$300,000, and in a separate deal acquired world sales rights.

The film opened in New York on September 22 under its original title of **Mad Dog**, and was given the same first release multi-cinema break as **The Godfather**, opening in four Loews Manhattan houses including the prestigious State and Orpheum. The first week's box-office returns were a healthy U.S.\$52,000. The following week **Mad Dog** splashed over the 40 theatre Flagship showcase clocking up U.S.\$185,000.

**Mad Dog's** Los Angeles release is currently in progress and the film has played in Philadelphia, Salt Lake City, Washington DC, San Francisco and Hawaii, with the rest of the U.S. to follow. Outside the U.S., **Mad Dog** has recently showcased in 12 cinemas in Toronto and a London opening is expected early in the new year.

The New York critical reaction to the film was mixed. But in Los Angeles, the filmmaking capital, critics acclaimed the film's originality and high production standards, in particular Dennis Hopper's performance as bushranger Daniel Morgan and Mike Molloy's cinematography.

Kevin Thomas of the *Los Angeles Times* (October 27) described the film as "a stunning epic... universal and timeless". He also noted that "Australia makes few films, and almost none attracts much attention beyond its own borders. But **Mad Dog** may change all that." Similar rave notices appeared in the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* (Ann Salisbury, October 29), and the December issue of *Playboy*.

Meanwhile in London, Laurence Myers and Bill Gavin of the newly-formed GTO Film Distributors picked up **Picnic at Hanging Rock** with a healthy cash upfront advance. Once in release **Picnic** confirmed that its festival popularity could be turned into box-office, and in four weeks at three first run theatres — including the prestigious West End ABC Shaftesbury Avenue — clocked up more than £44,000.

In spite of initial trade reviews which put **Picnic** into the "art film" class, the reaction from London critics was almost unanimous praise for the film. In particular, Alexander Walker in *The Evening Standard* and John Russell Taylor in *Sight and Sound* acclaimed the film's haunting qualities and visual beauty.

The Filmways co-production **Goodbye Norma Jean** has also opened in London and has chalked up more than £20,000 in four weeks in the West End.

On other fronts, **Caddie** picked up two awards at the September San Sebastian Festival: the Special Jury Prize, and an award to Helen Morse for Best Actress. And in Beverly Hills, the newly-formed Inter Planetary Pictures are reported to have paid a six-figure sum for the U.S. rights to Film Australia's **Let the Balloon Go**. RS

## SALES

Territories only. No complete financial details available.

### Picnic At Hanging Rock

U.S.  
Britain  
Canada  
France  
Germany  
Belgium  
Israel  
Scandinavia  
South Africa  
Switzerland  
Italy  
Holland  
Malaysia/Singapore

### Mad Dog Morgan

U.S.  
Canada  
Sweden  
Finland  
Norway  
Switzerland  
Greece  
British West Indies  
Ex French Colonies  
Venezuela  
San Domingo  
Columbia

### Fantasm

Britain  
Holland  
Belgium  
Switzerland  
Israel  
Greece  
Portugal

### Caddie

Germany  
France  
Belgium  
Switzerland  
Canada

### Let the Balloon Go

U.S.  
Germany  
Italy  
Belgium

### The Trespassers

Britain  
Italy  
Spain  
Latin America

### Promised Woman

Britain  
Greece

## INDEPENDENTS UNITE

More than 50 NSW filmmakers recently formed themselves into the Association of Independent Filmmakers with the aim of creating optimum conditions for the commercial distribution and exhibition of Australian short films. The AIF points out that in recent years a number of quality short films have been produced, but few have obtained theatrical or television release. In fact, ironically they are often seen by larger audiences overseas than in Australia.

One of the first steps of the AIF was to put a submission to the Australian Film Commission, a body which is directly involved in the future of independent filmmakers through its financing and marketing activities.

As one of the pre-conditions of AFC funding of cinema or television projects is some sort of prior commitment from a station

or distributor, one might surmise — as do members of the AIF — that the national broadcasting service should be involved in pre-production discussion with independent filmmakers. Indeed, one ABC staff member indicated recently that in future the Features Department would like to meet independent filmmakers prior to production. This would offer the filmmaker a better chance of having his film accepted for screening and enhance his chance of securing AFC funding.

Unfortunately however, this unofficial suggestion of a new ABC purchasing policy has been discounted by an ABC spokesman. In fact, there does not appear to be an official ABC policy on independently-produced Australian films at all. All product submitted to the Features Department, whether Australian or overseas, is assessed in the same way.

Another area of concern to members of the AIF is the government's production facility, Film Australia, which has traditionally offered some production opportunity to independent filmmakers. However, in the past two years, only eight films have been contracted out for a total of \$251,000.

Film Australia has also been a regular employer of freelance artists and technicians, including directors, editors, camera operators and writers, and over the past two years these contracts have amounted to something like \$350,000. The AIF believes that over the next few years, these allocations should be significantly increased.

The AIF submission to the AFC outlines in detail problems facing independent filmmakers and pinpoints the difficulties of producing, distributing and exhibiting independent films in this country.

In an attempt to draw attention to the problems facing independent producers, *Cinema Papers* sought and obtained permission from the AIF's working party to publish the submission in this issue. However, permission was later withdrawn on the grounds that publication would jeopardize the success of the submission.

Hopefully, in the next issue the AIF will make the contents of the submission available for publication. KW

## HOYTS INNOVATES

Since the appointment of John Mostyn to the managing directorship of Hoyts Theatres some 18 months ago, the film industry has been closely observing the attempts by this traditionally conservative chain to jazz up its image.

Some of the new Hoyts gimmicks have proved successful: the new art house image of Sydney's Mayfair Theatre; the upgrading of group sales and party bookings; the development of Melbourne's Cinema Centre and Mid City complexes. Others have proved less successful: the attempt to turn Melbourne's Athenaeum cinema into an art house, the new mini Cinema 6 in Melbourne's Mid City; and the so-called 'family' drive-in at Bulleen in Melbourne.

The latter experiment was partly set in motion to appease a vocal minority who have been lobbying state governments in Victoria and NSW in an attempt to have R certificate films banned from drive-in theatres. Hoyts spent more than \$10,000 promoting the family drive-in concept, playing combination G, NRC and M rated programs. But all to no avail — the public stayed away.

At the same time Hoyts, like everyone else in the exhibition industry, are presently reeling under the worst slump that the film business has known since the introduction of black and white television in 1956. Film after film is going down without even recovering launching costs. Twentieth Century-Fox U.S. recently announced its third quarter 1976 fiscal report and although profits were up — due to the smash successes of **The Omen**

and **Silent Movie** — foreign theatre operations were down a whopping 74 per cent from U.S.\$4,631,000 in 1975 (third quarter) to U.S.\$1,193,000. Australian involvement with Hoyts was specifically blamed for the downturn, and Hoyts admit admissions are down almost 60 per cent on last year.

Fortunately, Hoyts have **The Omen** (which in its first week in Melbourne grossed an all time record \$40,000 plus), which will showcase in their new seven cinema Entertainment Centre, due to open over a seven-day period from December 16.

The Entertainment Centre, which will substantially upgrade Hoyts' Sydney outlets, is claimed to be the world's largest cinema complex, housing, in addition to the seven cinemas, a shopping complex and discotheque. Hoyts have already placed three of their older cinemas on the property market and others will meet a similar fate once the 'sevenplex' opens.

Launching the new complex will be Hexagon's **Mrs Eliza Fraser**, Columbia's **Barney** as well as **The Eagle Has Landed**, **The Pink Panther Strikes Again**, **Cousin Cousine** and **Silent Movie**. RS

## INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS HIT BY 'DOWN TIME' SQUEEZE

The color TV bonanza has unexpectedly given local independent producers a new headache. The Film and Television Production Association of Australia, which has a membership of approximately 40 film production houses, announced recently that its members were being squeezed by stations quoting unreasonably low rates for producing commercials.

The in-house activity of stations has increased recently as they try to keep their expensive color equipment occupied during down time. Stations have the ability to write-off production expenses against air time and can, therefore, easily undercut independent production houses.

Mr Graham Farrar of the FTPAA said recently: "It would appear that one Sydney station charged \$300 for producing a commercial which would normally cost \$5000." The commercial was placed solely on the station concerned, and of the \$300 charged, \$280 was for materials. "Presumably the remaining \$20 was for labor," Mr Farrar said.

In addition, the association claimed that stations are encouraging television program packages to use the facilities of production houses associated with stations rather than those of completely independent film houses.

The existence of prosperous and adventurous independent production houses was a notable catalyst in the establishment of the feature industry: Royce Smeal's involvement in **The Cars That Ate Paris**, Bilcock and Copping's in **Stork** and the **Alvin** films, Fred Schepisi and Film House in **The Devil's Playground**.

Filmmakers will be watching the stations' activities with interest, while the FTPAA plans to discuss the matter with its legal advisers who believe that the stations' activities are in contravention of the restraint of trade provisions of the Trade Practices Act. GG

## EXHIBITORS AND DISTRIBUTORS INVEST

No doubt, flushed by the success of their financial involvement in **Picnic at Hanging Rock**, and the success of **Caddie**, the Greater Union Organization and GUO Film Distributors recently announced further participation in local production.

Presently shooting is Michael Thornhill's **The F. J. Holden** on a budget of around \$290,000. Upcoming is Donald Crombie's



\$500,000 production of *The Irishman*, Pat Lovell's *Summerfield* for around \$400,000, and Michael Pate's *The Mango Tree*.

Roadshow, in addition to its continuing involvement in Hexagon — who are currently completing *High Roll* — have also made a small investment in Joan Long's *The Picture Show Man*, which they will distribute. John Lamond's new project *Voyage to Sexual Discovery*, which follows his box-office success, *Australia After Dark*, also has Roadshow involvement.

Following *Fantasm* and *Goodbye Norma Jean*, Filmways are in the process of setting up an ongoing production facility to be called the Australian International Film Corporation with Tony Glinne as its executive director. The AIFC are presently shooting a sequel to *Fantasm* and will soon go into production with *Body Count*.

Of the American-owned distributor members of the Motion Picture Distributors' Association, only Columbia with *Barney* have turned some of their profits back into the industry. However, with the local success of films like *Picnic* and *Caddie*, and the major U.S. distribution deals of *Mad Dog Morgan*, and *Let The Balloon Go*, perhaps 1977 will see the entry of the American-owned distributors into local production.

The revenue such investments could generate would be of benefit to all concerned, and there is no doubt that the distribution expertise of the majors would have a significant impact on the local industry.

RS

## GREEN AND IAC REPORTS

Two reports have been issued that raise serious questions about the Government's intentions in relation to the performing arts, broadcasting and the use of television to relay or even substitute for live performances.

The Australian Industries Commission has recommended that:

1. The assistance currently given to support the operating costs of performing arts organizations should be phased out over the next five years.
2. The available assistance should be progressively redirected towards (and shared reasonably equally among) the three major objectives of: improving education in the performing arts, especially the understanding among children of the basic elements of these arts; expanding dissemination of the performing arts to the community generally, mainly by the use of modern technology; encouraging innovations in the performing arts, particularly those relating to the distinctive characteristics of the Australian community.

There is a close relationship between these findings and the report of the Green Inquiry into broadcasting in Australia, especially where they involve the use of television to transmit drama, opera and music programs. The Green Inquiry was prevented, because of its terms of reference, from probing the essential area of the economic basis and present viability of broadcasting. So the way is clear for the Government to recommend drastic cuts in subsidies to the performing arts and at the same time ask its new Broadcasting Tribunal (to be set up following the Green recommendations) to consider the broader use of educational and cultural programs through the television channels.

Considering that local content in any serious cultural terms has fallen throughout the past three years, it is unlikely that the commercial stations will increase their expenditure in this area. And the ABC, which last year televised more than 60% local content, has been forced to cut drastically its projected quota of Australian drama programs for the coming year.

The worst result for the performing arts would be a trendy commitment on the part of the Government to a greater use of television even within schools for cultural programs, accompanied by a phasing out of grants to performing arts organizations. The assumption is that the arts can survive without permanent, established companies; that needs will somehow produce the organization to put on these traditional and expensive performances.

There is also, throughout the report, a confusion about the question of standards. Although none of the witnesses to the inquiry were able to define precisely what they meant by standards of excellence, it does not mean that these standards do not exist. And to sidestep the problem of maintaining standards by attempting to use television to duplicate what few performances might continue to exist appears absurd.

The Green inquiry into broadcasting is ambiguous on the same question of standards. It assumes that these will be laid down in codes of broadcasting to be drawn up by the ABC and commercial stations, after the formation of the new statutory bodies to control broadcasting. But it does not give any in-

dication of what the standards might be, or the criteria for assessing the standards.

In the case of both reports, the likely result of this uncertainty is to give the Government the opportunity to insist on simple criteria of economic efficiency. The IAC report is highly critical of the failure of any of the bodies currently receiving assistance for performing arts to defend their right to grants; and the Minister for Postal and Telecommunications, Mr Robinson, has repeatedly defended the proposed new structures for broadcasting in terms of their supposed greater efficiency.

The real danger is that all other criteria for excellence in broadcasting, and the performing arts, will be ignored, and the Government will be able to pursue its path of rigorous financial stringency towards artists, filmmakers, broadcasters, and any other kind of apparent elite. JO'H

## BIAS?

Given the city-based tensions and jealousies that exist in Australia, it is only natural that various funding bodies have been accused of state-based bias.

The funding activities of one such body, the former Film, Radio and Television Board of the Australia Council, are listed below. These statistics relate to loans and grants made through the Basic Production Fund (Experimental Film Fund), the Advanced Production Fund (Film Production Fund) and the Script Development Fund during the 1975/76 financial year.

While the FRTVB has now been transferred to the AFC where it will operate as the Creative Development Branch, whether or not it will continue to operate along already established guidelines is moot. In fact, whether it will work any better at all is also in doubt.

Obviously the Commission has not yet fully analyzed the operations of the FRTVB, nor has it formulated policy on the operation of the Creative Development Branch. Hopefully the following analysis will assist the Commission in its review of the Board's funding activities.

While data for all states has been included in the following survey, it should be pointed out that applications from WA, Queensland, SA, ACT and Tasmania are extremely low, and care should be taken in interpreting the statistics.

## EXPERIMENTAL FILM FUND

Total grants 107  
Total applicants 344

	Grants	Applications	Success rate %
NSW	30	130	23
VIC	55	135	41
WA	7	12	58
QLD	7	30	23
SA	6	29	21
ACT	1	7	14
TAS	1	1	100

The 107 grants made in the 1975/76 financial year totalled \$254,513. Of this \$102,566 — or 40.3 per cent — was allocated to the NSW applicants, and \$102,310 — or 40.2 per cent — to Victoria. The balance of \$49,637 — or 19.5 per cent — was distributed among the other states. The average NSW grant was \$3419 and the Victorian grant \$1860.

The assessors for the Basic Production Fund were:

NSW	Anthony Buckley	Ian Macrae
	Gill Eatherley	Jack Clancy
	John Power	Richard Franklin
	Celestino Ella	Brian Williams
	Chris McGill	Guy Baskin
	Tony Wheller	Terry Jennings
	Jane Oehr	Sue Mogg
VIC	Ross Dimsey	Jonathan Dawson
	Rod Bishop	Andrew Pike

## ADVANCED PRODUCTION FUND

Total grants 24  
Total applicants 122

	Grants	Applications	Success rate %
NSW	18	81	22
VIC	4	19	21
WA	2	10	20
QLD	0	3	0
ACT	0	0	—
SA	0	6	0
TAS	0	3	0

The 24 grants made during the year totalled \$393,603. Of this \$309,639 — or 78.7 per cent — was allocated to NSW applicants, and \$57,164 — or 14.5 per cent — to the Victorian applicants. The balance of \$26,800 — or 6.8 per cent — was distributed among the other states. The average NSW grant was \$21,866 while the average Victorian grant was \$14,291.

The assessors for the Advanced Production Fund were:

NSW	Don Crombie	Julien Pringle
	Cecil Holmes	David Burrow
	James Richetson	Keith Gow
	Chris McCullough	Alan Bateman
	Chris Noonan	Ted Ogden
	Howard Rubie	

There were no assessors from other states.

## SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT FUND

Total grants	44
Total applicants	179

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	Grants	Applications	Success rate %
NSW	30	119	25
VIC	8	26	31
QLD	2	14	14
SA	3	11	27
WA	1	8	12
TAS	0	0	—
ACT	0	1	0

The 44 grants made during the year totalled \$72,500, of this \$52,550 — or 72.5 per cent — went to NSW applicants and \$12,650 — or 17.4 per cent — to Victorian applicants. The balance of \$7300 — or 10.1 per cent — was distributed among the other states. The average NSW grant was \$1752 and the Victorian grant \$1581.

The assessors — all from NSW — were:

Chris McCulloch	Julien Pringle
Chris Noonan	David Burrow
Howard Rubie	Moya Wood
Ted Olson	AB

## ARE OUR NUTS TOO BIG?

The expense figure of a cinema, or "nut" as the U.S. film trade refers to it, is a crucial factor in determining the amount of film hire that a distributor will receive from an exhibitor, and ultimately the money that the producer and investors will receive from the distributor.

It has been said that Melbourne and Sydney cinemas have expense figures higher, on average, than any other cinemas in the world outside New York's first-run Manhattan houses (see list below).

Exhibitors are reluctant to provide the expense figures of their cinemas for publication, but on average they vary between \$3000 and \$12,000. These figures are made up of the following elements:

- (1) Fixed cost items including rent — or seven per cent of capital investment — rates and taxes, insurances, public liability and workers compensation, depreciation of furniture and fittings.
  - (2) Payroll, including wages for staff and management, long service leave.
  - (3) Maintenance.
  - (4) House expenses, including power, cleaning, projection lamps, sound services, heating.
  - (5) Overheads including petty cash, printing advertising and publicity, telephone, stationery, administration and audit fees.
- Generally, newer smaller cinemas have higher expense figures than older small cinemas, and old large cinemas are somewhere in between.

Although there are some half dozen separate deals used between exhibitors and distributors, the most common one for general release films is the so-called Quarter Scale, or Schedule I formula, which sets out a series of ratio of receipts to expenses and is used to calculate the film hire percentage rate payable to the distributor by the exhibitor.

Under this scheme, the gross box-office receipts for the week (excluding Sunday, which is treated separately) are divided by the total theatre expenses allowed for the cinema. The ratio obtained is checked against the formula to ascertain the percentage of film hire payable. The formula schedule is set out below.

To take a hypothetical case: patrons pay \$6000 over the box-office at the cinema for the week — this is called the gross box-office. The cinema has an expense figure of \$3000. Divide the box-office by the expense figure, which in this case is 2.000. The formula rates this ratio as earning 40 per cent, which is \$2400 of the \$6000 gross. This is the payable film hire.

The formula provides for a higher percentage of the gross box-office to be paid if there is a higher take at the box-office. It is easy to see by playing around with the formula that a high grossing film will pay off its producer much faster, because generally the deductions a distributor makes from the film hire he receives will be constant.

It is also easy to see that if the expense figures for a particular cinema could be lowered — yet all other things remain equal — then the producer would recoup faster. RS

## 25% OF HIRE AS THEATRE PROFIT FORMULA

Schedule of ratios of receipts to expenses for determining the film hire percentage rate payable under this agreement.

Percentage rate payable	of gross box-office receipts	Ratios receipts to expenses taken to nearest \$1
70	"	8.000
69	"	7.273
68	"	6.667
67	"	6.154
66	"	5.714
65	"	5.333
64	"	5.000
63	"	4.706
62	"	4.444
61	"	4.211
60	"	4.000
59	"	3.810
58	"	3.636
57	"	3.478
56	"	3.333
55	"	3.200
54	"	3.077
53	"	2.963
52	"	2.857
51	"	2.758
50	"	2.667
49	"	2.581
48	"	2.500
47	"	2.420
46	"	2.353
45	"	2.285
44	"	2.222
43	"	2.162
42	"	2.105
41	"	2.051
40	"	2.000
39	"	1.951
38	"	1.904
37	"	1.861
36	"	1.818
35	"	1.778
34	"	1.739
33	"	1.702
32	"	1.666
31	"	1.633
30	"	1.600
29	"	1.569
28	"	1.538
27	"	1.509
26	"	1.481
25	"	1.454
24	"	1.428
23	"	1.403
22	"	1.379
21	"	1.356
20	"	1.333
19	"	1.311
18	"	1.290
17	"	1.270
16	"	1.250
15	"	1.231
14	"	1.212
13	"	1.194
12	"	1.176
11	"	1.159
10	"	1.142

## NEW YORK FILM 'HOUSE NUTS'

	BROADWAY	US\$
CINERAMA (RKO-Stanley Warner—1,127)		\$15,000
CRITERION (B. S. Moss—1,520)		\$17,250
DeMILLE (Walter Reade—1,463)		\$15,000
FORUM (Norel—898)		\$12,500
NEW EMBASSY (Norel—549)		\$10,500
PENTHOUSE (RKO-Stanley Warner—978)		\$14,500
RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL (Rockefellers—6,200)(1)		see below
RIVOLI (United Artists Theatre Corp.—1,545)		\$18,500
STATE TWO (Loews—1,174)		\$16,500
TRANS-LUX WEST (Trans-Lux—600) (2) see below		\$14,500
VICTORIA (Reade—1,008)		\$14,500
ZIEGFELD (Reade—1,200)		\$16,500

## EAST SIDE

BARONET (Reade—430)	\$7,500
BEEKMAN (Rugoff—538)	\$6,750
CINEMA ONE (Rugoff—700)	\$8,500
CINEMA TWO (Rugoff—291)	\$4,500
COLUMBIA ONE (UATC—500)	\$6,500 (3)
COLUMBIA TWO (UATC—500)	\$6,500 (3)
CORONET (Reade—590)	\$8,500
EAST SIDE CINEMA (UATC—250)	\$4,000 (4)
59TH ST. TWIN I (RKO-Stanley Warner—450)	\$5,000
(5)	
59TH ST. TWIN II (RKO-Stanley Warner—450)	\$5,000
(5)	
FINE ARTS (Reade—468)	\$7,000
PLAZA (Rugoff—510)	\$7,500
68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE (Brecher-Ackerman—360)	\$5,000
SUTTON (Rugoff—549)	\$7,500
TOWER EAST (Loews—588)	\$8,000
TRANS-LUX EAST (Trans-Lux—600)	(2)

## WEST 57th ST. AREA

FESTIVAL (Reade—546)	\$6,500
LINCOLN ART (Brecher-Ackerman—580)	\$6,500
LITTLE CARNEGIE (Reade—520)	\$5,500
PARIS (Rugoff—568)	\$8,250

## YORKVILLE

CINE (Loews—599)	\$7,750
86TH ST. EAST (Town & Country—600)	\$6,000
ORPHEUM (Loews—1,025)	\$18,000
RKO 86TH ST. TWIN I (RKO-SW—450)	\$5,000
RKO 86TH ST. TWIN II (RKO-SW—450)	\$5,000
TRANS-LUX 86TH ST. (Trans-Lux—600)	(2)

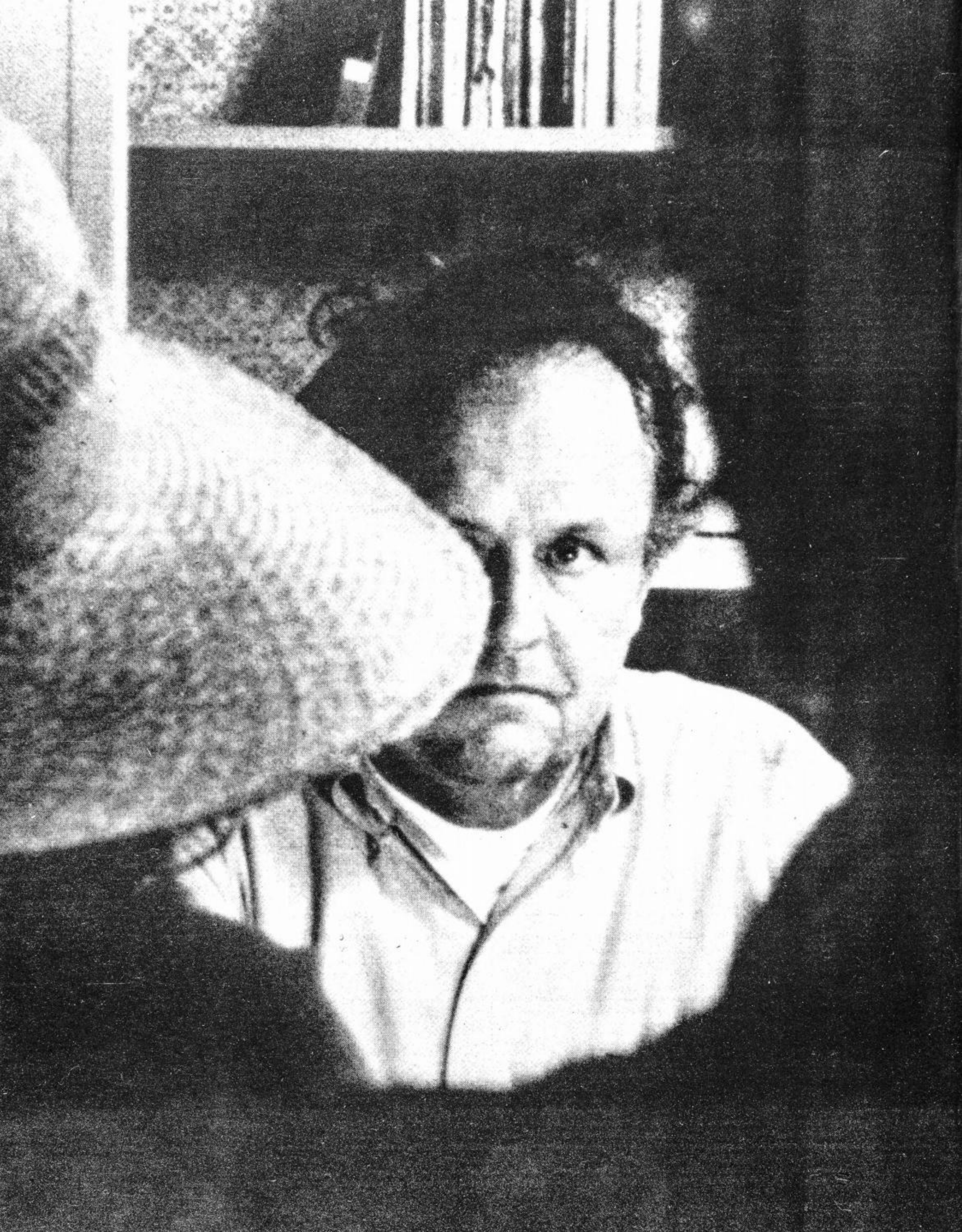
## MURRAY HILL

MURRAY HILL (Rugoff—568)	\$6,000
34TH ST. EAST (Reade—456)	\$5,250

## WE WERE WRONG

The editor wishes to apologize for any embarrassment caused to Mr Robert Kirby for incorrectly referring to him as the chairman of directors of Hexagon Productions in an item titled *Hexagon Marches On* in *The Quarter* column of the Sept-Oct 76 issue. Mr Kirby is in fact the managing director.









# UNDERGROUND

## Emile de Antonio and the Weatherpeople

The Weather Underground grew out of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), formed in the United States in the early 1960s. Several Weatherpeople went underground in 1969 and have been sought by the F B I since for unlawful flight to avoid arrest in connection with the Days of Rage (Chicago, 1969). In 1974 the Weather Underground issued their collective political statement, a 156-page book titled *Prairie Fire*, and since then they have issued a bi-monthly magazine, *Osawatomie*.

Emile de Antonio is a producer/director whose work includes the films "Point of Order", "In The Year Of The Pig", and "Millhouse: A White Comedy". After reading *Prairie Fire* he proposed to the Weather Underground that a film would reach more of their intended public than print would. The

Weatherpeople agreed to do a film with him, and they chose Billy Ayers, Kathy Boudin, Bernardine Dohrn, Jeff Jones and Cathy Wilkerson to represent them in the film. Emile de Antonio and filmmakers Mary Lampson and Haskell Wexler then formed a collective to produce the film titled "Underground".

The three filmmakers and the unfinished film were subpoenaed by the government before a Los Angeles grand jury in May, 1975, but they refused to co-operate in any way. They were supported by many filmmakers and other people, and the government was subsequently forced to drop the subpoenas.

Michie Gleason, a filmmaker and member of the Los Angeles *Prairie Fire* Workshop, interviewed Emile de Antonio on the occasion of the Los Angeles opening of "Underground".

In "Underground" the Weatherpeople discuss their personal histories in relation to their current politics. Could you give any key points in your own political history that brought you to be interested in a group like the Weather Underground?

I'm a generation removed from the Weather Underground people. I lived through and participated in, as an older person, a great many of the struggles that they were in. The right wing in this country and the apathetic mass of TV viewers regard the Weatherpeople as an aberration, as terrorists, which they're not. They have deep roots. People like Cathy Wilkerson and Kathy Boudin were arrested together when they were teenagers. They didn't come to violence all at once, they came to it in the best way, which is by finding out how pacifist methods failed. They were in the civil rights movement. They came out of the civil rights movement, and like others, applied the tactics of the civil rights movement to the peace movement.

I followed that line too. I was divorced from any political grouping, because living in the late 1940s and 1950s in this country there was only Communist Party, United States, which was simply not a viable party for me. So you became isolated, which is the great thing

"Could I say one thing first that I'd like you to transcribe? This is a message in a sense from me to the Australian people. I know my film "In The Year Of The Pig" was the one that the Australian resistance used in the working class and union resistance and peace resistance to Australian involvement to the war in Vietnam, and that "Millhouse" is the most successful American documentary that's ever played in Australia, so the people have a wide range of experience with my kind of left politics. Now the important thing to say is that this film, "Underground", is not my film. It's a collective film, whereas the others weren't. "Underground" is a genuinely collective film, made by three people."

that I saw happening in this country in 1960 when SDS was formed. It reminded me of my own youth and I identified right away with these people. In my youth there was the Young Communist League and there was the American Student Union which was on the Attorney-General's list. They weren't as disciplined or as together as SDS, but it was organized for the same thing. It was to fight against Hitler, to fight fascism in this country, to fight racism.

By the time 1962 rolled around people were more sophisticated, but finally, when the Democratic Convention occurred in Chicago in 1968, you could see that this student movement and the peace

movement, the legitimate pacifist movement against the war, were destroyed, because the state wasn't going to allow it to happen. Then you had a series of activities on the part of the government that were some violent and some clever. One clever one was Nixon's idea, of getting rid of the draft. This got the middle class resistance to the war out of the picture. It got the young kids who were in college uninterested.

The violence that came with the Chicago convention of 1968 was followed by Jackson State and Kent State. And you see what is lacking in American political life and, I suspect, in Australian political life as well, is passion. The

Weatherpeople stand for passion. They had a passionate response to this violence, a response of outrage that nobody was doing anything, and this is why they did the Days of Rage and why I defend that action. Although at the time I thought it was partly crazy, I was still filled with admiration that a small group of people would take on the entire police apparatus of Chicago — not one day, but four days, day after day. And already there was that strong feminist position built into that. There was a separate women's action.

I think yesterday's review of *Underground* in the *Los Angeles Times* was the most extraordinary review I've ever read in the straight press, because the writer ended his paragraph by saying he was nervous about it, but maybe it was the wave of the future. And that's what I believe.

Following up on the women's issue, you bring up in the film that the Weatherpeople formerly had a tough-male posture, and they talk about how the women helped them and made them change. How important do you think that change was to their present organization as you experienced it?

I think it's the most profound change that's happened to them, frankly. Before, it was the anger of



AO Form No. 110 (Rev. 5-68)

Subpoena to Testify Before Grand Jury

**United States District Court**  
FOR THE  
**CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

To EMILE de ANTONIO  
MARY LAMPSON  
HASKELL WEXLER

You are hereby commanded to appear in the United States District Court for the Central

District of California at Rm. 1346B, 1300 U.S. Ct. Bldg. in the City of

Los Angeles on the 12 day of June 1975 at 9:30 o'clock A.M.

to testify before the Grand Jury and bring with you any and all motion picture film, including, but not limited to all negatives, working copies and prints, and all sound tracks and sound recordings made in connection with the filming of such motion pictures, concerning a group known as the Weathermen or Weather Underground.

This subpoena is issued on application of the UNITED STATES.

RCB:ycg  
213-688-2391

EDWARD M. KRITZMAN

Date May 22 1975  
WILLIAM D. KELLER  
United States Attorney

By Robert J. Folliott  
Robert J. Folliott Deputy U.S. Attorney

Subpoena served on de Antonio, Lampson and Wexler.

an alienated left, dominated by macho ideals — that courage, for example, belonged to men. That was the key to the Days of Rage: there was a separate women's action, in which women with helmets and clubs went up against the police. It wasn't just an attempt to lose white skin privilege on the part of males, it was to show that women could do it too. The organization was still male-dominated when that happened, but the growth that came out of it was also the triumph of the collective, and it was the triumph of women organized as women. The triumph is the fact that it finally makes no difference who the chief spokesperson is, whether it's Bernardine Dohrn or Billy Ayers or Jeff Jones.

They've come through it all the way so that it's not a problem for them as it is for people living outside. The person who speaks best speaks, and there's no hang-up about it. That's the death of sexism, but that's a very hard place to get to. Women themselves have been split up. You have radical lesbians in one place, NOW (National Organization for Women) in another place, many different groups . . . They simply lack the cohesiveness and revolutionary firmness of the Weatherpeople.

the theatre — and I'm a fairly tough guy and I don't shed tears ever — was that Jeff Jones' father came up to me and said: "I want to thank you very much for that film, because I saw my son and I haven't seen him, and I heard him." And I said to him: "The only thing I can say is that I would be proud to be the father of Jeff Jones. I think you should be proud for his courage and his stand and his revolutionary ardor." And we shook hands in a way that two people can when they believe what they're saying.

It's great that the families of all these people have seen them on film. Bernardine Dohrn's parents came to New York and saw it with Jennifer, her sister, who's in Prairie Fire Organizing Committee in New York. Cathy Wilkerson's mother came to the first press screening in New York. Billy Ayers' brother saw it in Madison, Wisconsin, U.S., and, of course, the Boudins, who are movement lawyers, saw the film before anybody because we had to have lawyers check it out. We didn't want to have anything in the film that would hurt them from a legal point of view. The families of these people are all positive, and admire and support them.

**Do you view making the film as a political act?**

**How did your attitudes toward the Weather Underground change or grow as you were associated with them making this film?**

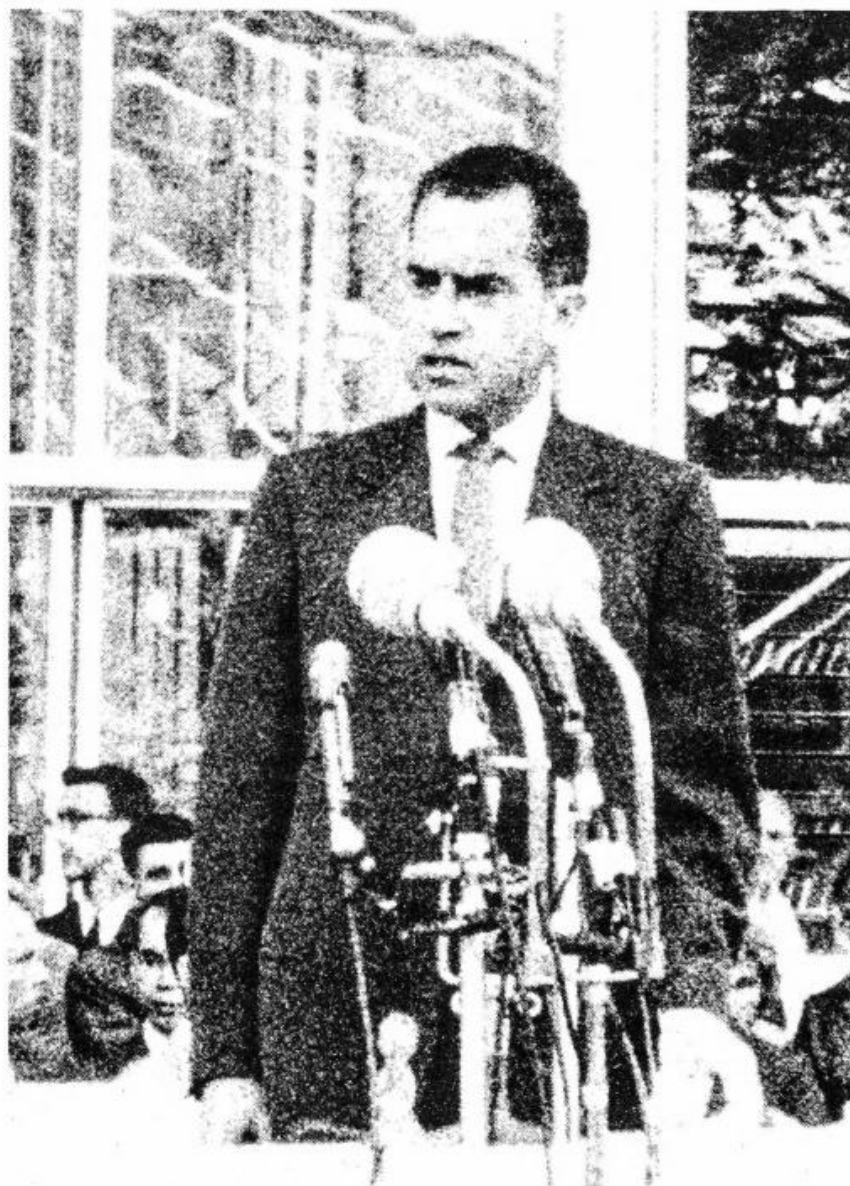
Well, you know, we were a collective, and if you're asking me personally, it's easy, if you're asking me about three of us, it's hard. I'll try both, briefly.

I have belonged to radical groups my whole life. I have never met a radical group that had such passion and such dedication and such tenderness for one another and such a true sense of a collective as the Weather Underground. In the short time I was with them this had a profound influence on me personally. I never could have worked on this film collectively without having experienced them collectively. Mary, who worked with me on the film, used to work for me. So I, in middle age, had to do a whole 180 degrees turn in my attitudes toward work, and toward my relationship with a woman who had worked for me in the past and was now actually equal with me. We achieved this in that Mary's vote every time was absolutely the equal of my vote, or maybe even more, because I had something to make up for. Haskell was never truly a part of this collective. He just shot the film and stayed here in L.A., but Mary and I sweated it out nine months cutting this film, with day-to-day arguments, day-to-day criticism, self-criticism.

But the experience of this film has changed my whole view. It's made me in total support of the Weather Underground. The nicest thing that happened last night at

Absolutely. Particularly Mary and I. We regard the film as a political weapon. The first screening of *Underground* was at Hostos Community College in the South Bronx (New York City), a neighborhood which is 100 per cent Black and Puerto Rican. The city of New York is closing down every public facility because the inner city is a ghetto. They closed down this college and some grammar schools and a hospital. We were enraged by this, so we took the film up there. The students had taken over the college and were holding it, and we played the film as a revolutionary act. We spoke with the people and explained the Weather Underground and explained their position on violence. They don't need any violence explained to them because their heads are getting busted all the time.

We see the film as an organizing instrument. We don't even ask that people agree with the Weather Underground, we simply ask that they look and listen to the film and address themselves to the questions raised in an honest way. You won't hear one word from any of those guys running in the beauty contest for President of the United States about the main issues — racism or imperialism or American domestic colonialism or the role of women. You will not hear any one of the major candidates talk about one goddammed thing that is substantive. We hope that this film will be shown where there are young people and working people and Third World people who know that these issues exist.



**Millhouse: A White Comedy**, liberating mothballed footage from Nixon's past.





Emile de Antonio (right), Haskell Wexler (centre) and the Weatherpeople in *Underground*.

**What kind of distribution of the film is now necessary to be consistent with the politics of the Weather Underground?**

When you are in this system, even if you are a revolutionary, you have to use some of the system, which is what revolutionaries have always done. So I'm happy that last night at the theatre in Venice, California, they had more people on a Wednesday night than they've had in years. And I'm happy that it's going to run for weeks in Boston and in New York in regular theatres where people are going to pay a lot of money. It's not the money that's interesting, it's the fact that classes of people who don't ordinarily see this kind of film are going to see it. Then, after these runs in regular theatres, it will be given away. But first you have to create the illusion in people's minds — and it's the truth — that the film is a film. That can only be done by playing it in theatres, then universities. It will never play on TV in this country. You don't expect it to play on TV. But I expect it to play on TV in other countries.

Wherever people can't pay, we want it given away, and the distributor has agreed to this. We also hope that *Prairie Fire* Organizing Committee — your group — can someday take the film and show it around and use it as a centre for discussion.

The film is going to be in the

Sydney and Melbourne film festivals and that's going to drive the CIA crazy! Right from the beginning this film has helped the Weather Underground. When we were subpoenaed we put the Weather Underground back on the front page. And when we resisted the subpoena we were back on the front page all over the country. The *Los Angeles Times* features are syndicated in 300 papers, and Narda Zacchino's article on us in that paper was headlined "Weatherpeople — Folk Heroes of the Radicals." Now, for the first time in Australia and in Europe, people are going to see genuine American revolutionaries who are living underground and who express the most advanced kind of revolutionary politics. That's a step forward.

**Where can people get the film?**

People in Australia can get the film by writing to: RBC Films, 933 N. La Brea, Hollywood, California, 90038 U.S.

There probably will be an Australian distributor since it's being seen at the festivals. This is what has happened in the past. In the case of *Millhouse* a regular commercial distributor offered a lot of money to distribute *Millhouse* and instead I gave it to the Film-makers Co-op which is first of all a collective. It's split two ways and one part is sexual freedom stuff and

the other part is political, so I gave it to them. I think that Mary and I would make the same decision here. We would like to give it for distribution in Australia to a political group.

**One thing that *Prairie Fire* and the Weatherpeople in the film make clear is the importance that they've placed on disciplined study of ideology in relation to class struggle. With that in mind, what are the main responsibilities for above-ground people as this film is distributed?**

The main responsibility of above-ground people who are sympathetic to the Weather Underground, like the PFOC (*Prairie Fire* Organizing Committee), is obviously to make the film available to as many people as possible, because it's a tool. And just as important as the film is *Prairie Fire* which is where all this began. And just as important as *Prairie Fire* is the periodical *Osawatimie*, which is the way in which the Weather Underground brings itself up to date on a bi-monthly basis. You know I love their mystery. A police question always asked is: "How do they get their money?" *Osawatimie* costs \$6000 an issue to put out. That's extraordinary because it means there's above-ground support. These people aren't isolated. They aren't really in that dinky little room in the film. That's a set, just

like a set in Hollywood; it's a prop, filled with props. They live and work and move around this whole country.

I'd like to say something about PFOC. I think the real future of the Weather Underground depends on the involvement of PFOC groups. I think this is the hardest question the Weather Underground has to face, and I'll be critical of it, I don't think it's faced it. Is PFOC going to be totally autonomous or is it going to wait for secret signals and directives from the Underground? I think that the Weather Underground as it goes through its stages of criticism/self-criticism has to lay down a general line. Then the PFOC groups have to be autonomous, free to make mistakes, because you don't learn otherwise. Bernardine quotes Ho Chi Minh that we learn more from our mistakes than from our victories and she's correct. The Weather Underground, I hope, is loose enough to work in an open way with PFOC so that your group here, for example, which I find woefully small but intensely interesting, can be free to go ahead and organize and politicize and try to change people's hearts and minds the way you do it. And you're going to make mistakes, but you can't feel that somebody's standing over your shoulder. This is like an open letter to the Weather Underground now that I'm speaking to you. Their future is really dependent to a great extent on what you people can do. You people have a tremendous historical responsibility to grow and to function as independent autonomous units.

**I'd like to discuss the filmmaking process. How did you structure not only your working relationships but also your decision-making policies both before and after the film so that they, too, would be consistent with Weather politics?**

We studied *Prairie Fire* as you have. Then once we went ahead to do the film there were long waiting periods, because dealing with people in the underground is not like you calling me up and I'm here and we're doing an interview. So I went back, and so did Mary, and we re-read the history of the Weather Underground. We went back and read all the communiques and saw all the mistakes the Weatherpeople had made, and there were a lot of mistakes.

Their recognition of those mistakes is the most impressive thing of all about them, frankly. You hear those words criticism, self-criticism so many times they don't mean anything. But the Weatherpeople really practise it and recognize their mistakes, and until you recognize your mistakes you have a monolithic, frozen organization or party like, say, the present party in the Soviet Union.

*Continued on P. 276*





**The Haunted Barn** by Frank Thring Snr: refused general approval in 1931 because the censor thought the whistling wind might upset the sensitive.



**Snow White** also ran into trouble with the censor in the 30s because of its scary cupboard skeleton scene.



Pier Paolo Pasolini's **120 Days in Sodom**: one of many acclaimed films to be banned outright in Australia.



# How Australian Film Censorship Works

**Janet Strickland**  
Deputy-Chief Censor

This is a revised version of a paper given at the Australian National Commission for the UNESCO seminar — "Entertainment and Society", in June 1976. The paper will be part of a UNESCO report of the seminar (to be edited by Dr. G. Caldwell and Dr. Paul Wilson).

This survey concentrates on the pragmatic. It discusses the practices of control and explains the part the Film Censorship Board plays in the control of films in Australia today.

The key questions are: What sort of decisions are made? How are they made? Who makes them? and Why are they made at all?

The debate on the effects of film on children and the community at large, and the degree of control which is both legitimate and tolerable in a democracy, has raged unabated since films were first introduced into Australia in 1896.

Cases of juvenile delinquency, attributed to the influence of the cinema, contributed to pressure, which resulted in the establishment of formal procedures in NSW in 1908, under the Theatre and Public Halls Act.

The Commonwealth Film Censorship Board was not established until 1917.

Up until 1930, films were approved, banned, cut or "conditionally approved". This "conditional approval" excluded those between the ages of 6 and 16. (A couple of curious decisions in the 1930s — **Snow White** (Disney) was refused general approval because it was thought that the skeleton in the cupboard might frighten the children; **The Haunted Barn** by Frank Thring Snr, was accorded similar treatment as the censor thought the whistling of the wind might upset the sensitive.)

With the onset of the Depression, pressure from exhibitors brought about the removal of the 6-16 clause and a new system of classifications was introduced, placing the responsibility for children and adolescents' viewing fairly on the shoulders of the parents.

The classifications were "For General Exhibition", "Not Suitable for Children", and "Suitable Only for Adults". The classifications were all of an advisory nature.

Between the years 1947 and 1949, all states passed legislation, concluding formal agreements with the Commonwealth, and delegating to this body all their powers and functions. (No appeals provisions in Victoria).

1970 saw the establishment of the Films Board of Review, replacing the single Appeal Censor.

In 1971 the "R" certificate was introduced (in spite of strong industry pressure). The "R" certificate heralded a new era in film censorship in Australia. At last adults could see, if they so desired, adult material treated in an adult way, which they had been deprived of seeing under a purely advisory system. Children could be protected from too early an exposure to the adult world, and adults would have some warning on the type of film they might expect to see.

In 1976 the Film Censorship Board is primarily concerned with the classification of films and informing the public on the nature of a particular film.

**The Man Who Fell To Earth**: released in an R version overseas, but brutally cut in Australia to meet the requirements of an M classification.

We are only concerned with the interpretation of the law, not with its enforcement.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE FILM CENSORSHIP BOARD

**Membership:** The Film Censorship Board is a full-time nine-member statutory board made up of the Chief Censor, the Deputy Chief Censor and seven Board members. As I hope would appear obvious, we are not a collection of dirty-minded little people working away with our scissors in some dimly-lit dungeon. I have always believed that the pen is mightier than the scissors. There are five men and four women on the Board and the ages range from mid-20s to mid-50s — with the majority of the Board being under 40.

**Facilities:** At our premises in the Imperial Arcade, Sydney we have eight theatrettes, handling all sizes of film (8mm, 16mm, 35mm and 70mm). We have co-axial cable connections to all TV stations and equipment for the viewing of both ½" and ¾" videotape cassettes.

We handled 12,052 films in 1975 — 1066 commercial theatrical films, 10,996 TV films and cassettes.

**Decision making:** Decisions on films are arrived at by a democratic voting system — the majority wins, and all members are equal.

Two Board members constitute a quorum, although most theatrical films are viewed by three, five, seven or nine members, depending on the problematic nature of the film. The full Board sees a film before it is rejected, and re-screens occur either when there is a marginal decision with less than a full Board, or at the request of Board members who are undecided as to what their decision should be.

Policy decisions, handling of the media, liaising with other government bodies and officials etc., are matters for the Chief Censor and/or Deputy Chief Censor.

## THE FUNCTIONS

1. To register films under Commonwealth legislation — Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations.
2. To classify films under the various State legislations.
3. To act as agents of the Australian Broadcasting Control Board in respect of imported television films, or films not made under the auspices of a TV station.
4. To examine advertising in relation to imported films and Australian films as required, under the provisions of both Commonwealth and State legislations.

### Avenue of Appeal

Any person aggrieved by any decision of the censor, in respect of theatrical films, can appeal to the Films Board of Review. This is, at pre-



sent, a five member, part-time Board which meets when an appeal is lodged.

Since the establishment of the Films Board of Review in January 1971, it has met 56 times and heard appeals on 93 theatrical films. It has dismissed 63 appeals and upheld 30.

The only higher appeal is that direct to the Minister (the Attorney-General of Australia) — and he may intervene under Regulation 40 of the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations.

Since January 1971, there have been four Ministerial interventions under this regulation:

- (a) **Percy** June 16, 1971: The Minister (Mr D. L. Chipp) directs the Chief Film Censor to withdraw the certificate of registration dated May 25, 1971, adding that he would be prepared to agree to film's registration after introduction of the "R" certificate.
- (b) **The Devils** January 4, 1972: The Minister (Mr D. L. Chipp) insists that all advertising which accompanies the film must carry in plain, bold type a suitable note warning people of what they might expect in the film.
- (c) **Skyjacked** August 1972: The Minister (Mr D. L. Chipp) directs that registration of the film under Regulation 20 of the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations be refused.
- (d) **Language of Love** August 2, 1973: The Minister (Mr Lionel Murphy) directs that the film be registered and that all publicity material carry the words "this is a sex education film."

## THE PHILOSOPHIES

The Film Censorship Board believes in, and tries to implement, within the limitation of the legislation, the censorship policies of both major political parties. (The following statements were issued through the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department):

### Liberal Censorship Policy (August 1974)

"Liberalism recognizes the basic right of adults to make their own decisions regarding the material they read, hear or see. Liberal Party policy will be based on the following principles:

1. Appropriate control of material which is offensive by current community standards where it is likely to be viewed or heard by citizens without forewarning, or be viewed or heard by children open to its influence.
2. Continued emphasis on both the freedom and the responsibility of the press, radio and television.
3. Recognition of the family as basic to social stability and the right of parents to apply their own religious, social and moral standards in the care and development of their children."

### Labor Censorship Policy (February 1973)

"The Labor government's policy is for federal laws to conform with the general principles that adults should be entitled to read, hear and view what they wish in private and in public and that persons — and those in their care — be not exposed to unsolicited material offensive to them."

I would like to stress again, that we do not believe in the traditional concepts of suppression and repression, but rather in the interpretation and implementation of the above policies. Neither are we interested in the enforcement of our decisions; this is strictly a matter for the state policing authorities.

In order to fully implement the above policies, it is our opinion that the law needs to be changed. The stated policies and the requirement to administer the legislation, as it stands

today, places us, sometimes, in a difficult and often invidious position.

About a year ago, we put a proposition to the Attorney-General that the law should be changed in order to implement the then Labor government's philosophy, removing the concepts of indecency and obscenity, which were so difficult to define, and introducing what amounted to an extra classification, a non-classification, or "unclassified" system as we called it.

The idea behind this extra category was that films which exceeded the limits of an "R" classification would be registered, but not classified, and allowed to find their own level in the community, having a regard to state laws relating to public exhibition. They would not be immune from prosecution under state laws. The idea seemed to us to have the following merits:

- (1) It would more fully implement the philosophy that adults should be free to read and hear and see whatever they wanted to in public or private, and that persons and those in their care would be protected from unsolicited material which was offensive to them.
- (2) It would legalize, and thus decriminalize the de-facto unclassified system which is operating in places like Kings Cross.

However, the idea has not been adopted to date.

## CLASSIFICATION OF THEATRICAL FILMS

The basic idea behind the classification system is to inform the public on the nature of a film. Both merit and context are taken into account when deciding a classification.

We prefer not to cut films, but to classify them as presented to us. However, films are often cut, either by the importer (sometimes before submitting them to us) or by the Film Censorship Board at the request of the importer — to enable him to gain a lower classification.

**G** For General Exhibition — all ages; family entertainment. These are not necessarily children's films, but will not contain material which might distress children or upset their parents. There is an on-going argument as to whether this classification should be "whiter than white", or family entertainment, with a broader spectrum.

**N.R.C.** Not Recommended for Children under 12. Plot, theme or treatment offends against concepts of "G" — may be some violence, less than pure language, "light" sex scenes — (i.e. head and shoulder shots) mostly in a fairly moral context. There are problems with this classification because of its negative orientation.

**M** Mature Audiences — 15 years and over. A difficulty lies in the public interpretation of maturity. The film may deal with essentially adult concepts, but the treatment is more discreet (than "R"). It may explore sexual relationships (both homosexual and heterosexual); may contain crude language; may depict violence — but treatment differs essentially from that of the "R" certificate in terms of degree of explicitness and overtress.

**R** Restricted to persons 18 years and over. Adult themes are often treated in an overt and explicit way. The treatment shows a greater exploitation of sex and violence; considered to be harmful to children and offensive to some sections of the community. The "R" serves as a warning. It is the only legally enforceable classification — the others are merely advisory.

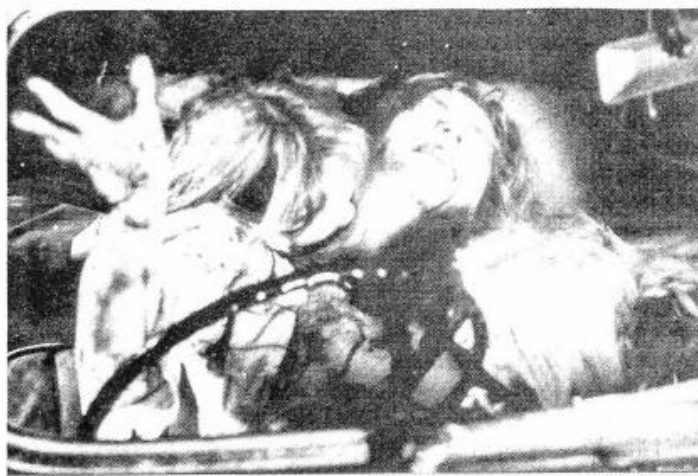
We believe that no theme or idea is in itself



Percy paved the way for the introduction of the R certificate in 1971.



The Devils: only approved for registration on the condition that publicity material carry explicit warning notices.



Vampires: uncut in Australia despite scenes of gratuitously graphic violence.

Fantasm: Australian soft-core sex film refused registration without cuts.





unacceptable in this classification — it is the treatment of that theme or concept which determines whether it is acceptable.

5. Rejected — under Regulation 13 of the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations and/or provisions of State Acts relating to films, which in the opinion of the Censor are:

- (a) indecent or obscene, blasphemous;
  - (b) injurious to morality, encourage or incite to crime;
  - (c) offensive to a friendly nation or to the people of a part of the Queen's dominions; and
  - (d) undesirable in the public interest.
- (Some of state Acts refer to matters of a disgusting nature).

Most films currently rejected — and that was about 3 per cent in 1975 — are those found under 13(a) as being "indecent or obscene". This may be applied to either sex or violence. Films have occasionally been rejected under 13(d) as being "not in the public interest" — such as those inciting to drug abuse, hijacking etc.

The difficulties in defining what is indecent or obscene is revealed in the court cases in the U.S. and Britain. In Australia, we fall back on the "current community standards" test, and say that something is indecent if it is grossly offensive to most sections of the community. We believe that hard-core pornography would be equated with indecency in most people's minds.

The films which are most commonly rejected are those, which in the opinion of the Board, are pornographic, or feature obscene violence.

Our working definition of pornography is: "Verbal or pictorial material devoted overwhelmingly to the explicit depiction of sexual activities in gross detail, with neither acceptable supporting purpose or theme, nor redeeming features of social literary, or artistic merit"

When we talk about obscene violence we think of such violence as being totally gratuitous, relished, dwelt upon, portrayed for its own sake — where (for example) the audiences are invited to "groove" on bloody nauseating close-ups and sadistic meaningless actions.

The Film Censorship Board does in a way exert a degree of both quantitative and qualitative control over films. Quantitative control in the sense that 3 per cent of films were rejected and 21 per cent were restricted (1975); qualitative control in as much as the overwhelmingly majority of those rejected were totally without redeeming social purpose or merit.

## CLASSIFICATION OF TELEVISION FILMS

We classify, on behalf of the Australian Broadcasting Control Board, all imported TV films, and Australian TV films which are not made under the auspices of a TV station.

The criteria and standards which we apply are those as set out in the Australian Broadcasting Control Board Television Program Standards.

These can be treated very briefly since their content lies within the province of the Control Board.

The classifications are:

- (G) May be televised at any time. Must be suitable for children of any age who are watching sets unattended;
- (A) Not recommended for children. Cannot be televised between 6 a.m. and 8.30 a.m.; 4.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. on weekdays; or between 6 a.m. and 7.30 p.m. on weekends.
- (AO) Suitable only for adults. Cannot be televised between 5 a.m. and 12 noon; 3 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. on weekdays —

and only after 8.30 p.m. on weekends.

There are two noticeable trends as regards TV material.

1. There is a greater awareness in the community of the possible effects on children of a constant diet of televised violence. This had led to a demand for a tightening up on the standards relating to violence in early evening programs.
2. The general acceptance of a more permissive cinema (and the introduction of the "R" certificate) has filtered down and influenced what the community considers acceptable in a later time slot — i.e. the "AO" classification. This has resulted in the passing for TV — (after 8.30 p.m.) of "Modified R" certificate films. Let me stress that "R" certificate films cannot be shown in toto on TV. "Modified R" films would possibly receive a theatrical "M" classification in their reduced form.

Our Board and the Broadcasting Control Board have agreed in principle that an extra classification — a late night time slot — would be a reasonable step to take to allow more adult material on TV, at times when children would not be viewing.

But to date our efforts to implement this idea have been frustrated by the commercial TV stations, whose over-riding concern, it would appear, is only for the dollar. Obviously there are some films which are "not suitable for TV" under the provisions of the standards as they now exist.

## TRENDS

To put the Australian scene into some world-wide perspective:

### (a) Overseas

**BRITAIN** The British Board of Film Censors is an industry-appointed body. Films may be shown in Britain without a BBFC certificate, at the discretion of the local councils.

The BBFC's reports and decisions emphasize the need for the protection of children and they continually refer back to the "community standards" concept when attempting to define "indecency". On the whole they are stricter in their classifications than we are, and order many more cuts in films in areas of sex and violence, nudity and language.

A recent report issued by the British Board of Film Censors expresses the opinion that the great advantage of the British system is its responsiveness to public opinion, which, in the absence of a Bill of Rights, is, it hopes, the best guarantee that freedom of expression will be balanced against social responsibility.

**NEW ZEALAND** The Board is a government body under the Department of the Interior. Information received from this Board shows that films are heavily cut in New Zealand often to meet the requirements of a lower classification. Bad language is cut from all films, regardless of classification, (even from the most restricted).

**U.S.** There is no central censorship authority. As in Britain, the Motion Pictures Association of America ratings are only given if a film is submitted to this industry body — and films can be shown without a rating. Most films that are shown without a rating or a self-imposed "X" rating, are hard-core pornography. These films are constantly being challenged in the courts, with very inconclusive results. *Deep Throat*, for example, has had about 60 prosecutions against it for obscenity in different parts of

the U.S. — some of them successful.

**FRANCE** Censorship, per se, was abolished in 1975, but in its inimitable way, the French government has made porn almost too hot to handle by slapping a 33 per cent tax on all X-rated films.

**SPAIN AND ITALY** Very restrictive; full frontal nudity in Spain is taboo. In Italy, although hard-core porn magazines are flourishing underground, "licentious hedonism" in films has been banned officially.

**JAPAN** Appears curiously ambivalent in its attitude towards pornography. I understand they employ children to brush out offending genitals in publications. No pubic hair or sex organs are permitted to be shown in films, in spite of Japan's long tradition of erotica. Japanese tourists are apparently avid pornography consumers.

**SOUTH-EAST ASIA** Possibly because of religious influences, pornography is heavily frowned upon, although it can be found under wraps.

**INDIA** Following the more restrictive political regime, there has been a drive towards discipline in other areas.

In May, 1976 the Censor Board told producers that scenes of violence and drinking would not be allowed in future films. (They had already rapped films which exploited sex).

**SCANDINAVIA** No censorship for adults in Denmark. Violence is censored in Sweden, and they have a 15 years old plus restriction on porn.

**NORWAY and FINLAND** Sex and violence are censored.

### (b) Australia.

When looking at the Australian scene, it is interesting to first examine trends (as evidenced by a statistical analysis) from the end of 1971 and beginning of 1972 to the end of 1975.

## STATISTICAL TRENDS

### 1. Theatrical films:

- (a) Overall increase in 35mm features from 649 in 1972 to 916 in 1975, (increase of 41 per cent). At that rate of increase by 1978 the Board will be examining 1292.35mm feature films annually.
- (b) The major supplier of feature films has been the U.S. with a steady 27 per cent of the total films examined in each of the past four years. The most significant changes have been the steady decrease in British films from 16.3 per cent of the total examined in 1972 to 8.73 per cent in 1975.

The Hong Kong "chop-socky" films reached a peak of about 9 per cent of the market in 1973 and 1974 and dropped back to slightly over 6 per cent in 1975.

The other trend has been the gradual increase in the proportion of West German and French "soft core" glossies over the period (France 4 per cent to 6½ per cent and West Germany 3 per cent to 6 per cent).

The number of Australian films (18 — 35mm, 19 — 16mm) increased in 1975, whereas in 1974 there were only 10 — 35mm and 5 — 16mm films.

- (c) The classification of theatrical features have remained relatively stable over the past three years.

In 1975, 16 per cent of those examined received a "G", 21 per cent an "N.R.C.", 25 per cent an "M", 21 per cent an "R" and 3 per cent were rejected. The remainder received a special condition (such as Festival films).

*Continued on P. 280*

# JILL ROBB



Could you briefly explain the set-up of the SAFC and your involvement there?

When the Corporation was founded, Gil Brealey employed me as film producer — in fact the first film producer at the Corporation. We worked with a very small staff for the first six months, then John Morris joined us — also as a film producer. I worked for two years as an executive producer, handling documentary work done for state government departments basically.

When Richard Smith, who was head of distribution, left to go back to Canada, Gil spoke to me about the possibility of taking over what was to be re-formed into the marketing section. Previously it had been distribution, which also handled the non-commercial side through the library. He decided, wisely I think, to split off the library as a separate entity — the State Film Library — and keep the marketing side wholly involved with the commercial area.

It was a very hard decision for me to make because I worked very happily under John Morris who had been made head of production. It was a very exciting 18 months and I learned a tremendous amount about making documentaries. However, I decided to give it a go.

Quite a change from what you had been doing ...

I suppose, although a lot of things I have done previously in film-making have been either ad-

Jill Robb is head of the South Australian Film Corporation's marketing division and a part-time member of the Australian Film Commission. Initially trained in public relations in London, she migrated to Australia in 1952 to become involved in retail promotion. Between 1954 and 1962 she ran her own model school and agency, as well as packing live television programs for local stations. Over the next 10 years she moved further into film and television production, working as casting director, production secretary, continuity and assistant producer on a number of documentaries and features including, "They're a Weird Mob", "Across the Top", "Contrabandits" and "Skippy". In this interview, Jill Robb talks to Terry Plane about her work at the SAFC.

ministrative, or on the business side.

How does the marketing division operate?

The marketing division handles all product, 16mm and 35mm, unless there is some film to which we don't have the distribution rights. We market all our films now so we are involved in selling 16mm prints theatrically (including placing them on television) both here and overseas, and non-theatrically to educational and lending library systems.

I think we have been amazingly successful in the 16mm field, when you bear in mind that all our films are sponsored. That is, they are not documentaries in the true sense of the word; they are films made for government departments for particular reasons: a police recruitment film; a film to go into

technical colleges to teach people to weld; a film depicting the history of a local area.

So they are not films you would think had a wide appeal. But they have been remarkably successful — certainly here in Australia — and we are just starting to develop the overseas market.

In marketing, we work very closely with production, in the sense that production comes to me and we discuss the sort of properties and projects they are developing. I give them a sort of feed-back from my contact with distributors and exhibitors — whether they be television network people or cinema people — about a project's local and international appeal, and whether the budget is going to mean that we have no chance of getting our money back in Australia.

So you begin your involvement at

quite an early stage in a project's development ...

Yes. I find it one of the most exciting aspects of this job. I also work closely with the head of production in actually putting the deal together — the investment deal — so we can approach potential investors for money and sell the corporation's services and high standards.

How do you choose markets, and after that, how do you exploit them?

I think it starts way back with the script. First, the market has to be isolated: will the appeal only be local, or international? Obviously if it only has appeal within Australia, then the budget has to have a low dealing. It would be nice if we could contain budgets around \$250,000 — then at least we would stand a chance of getting our money back here.

If a film has much wider appeal, if it has international potential, then probably one of the safest ways to safeguard the investors' money is to go after up-front involvement. That is, involve a big distributor who has sufficient confidence in the script to give us one-third or a half of the budget in return for rights to a certain territory.

How did you approach the marketing of "Sunday Too Far Away" and "Picnic at Hanging Rock"?

Well, they are two quite different



# Storm boy

An S.A. Film Corporation feature film.



cases, so we should probably take them separately. **Sunday Too Far Away** was made on a budget of \$280,000, and the producer, Gil Brealey, believed that its major market was Australia. So, no attempt was made to clean up the Australian accent or do anything that would destroy the accuracy of the Australian characters.

We decided to handle it ourselves here in Adelaide, and entered into a general distribution deal for the rest of Australia with Roadshow. Both situations have worked extremely well. Roadshow have promoted it admirably. They gave us very good outlets and took it back into the centre of Sydney following an initial run in the suburbs where it had built a word of mouth reputation.

We learned a tremendous amount through distributing and exhibiting it ourselves here, which for me was an extraordinarily valuable experience. As you may know it ran nearly seven months in Adelaide.

We then took it to the Cannes Film Festival last year and it was entered in the Directors' Fortnight. We offered it in all markets at Cannes and achieved a number of international sales. We sold it to France and Germany, and we are negotiating with Austria, Poland, the Soviet Union, Canada and South Africa.

Unfortunately no major American distributor was interested in handling the film,

although Paramount was quite excited when they saw it at Cannes. They asked me to fly to New York with a print and did have considerable debate about it.

But they eventually felt that the film was too ethnic. And I think that's a fair comment. We would not see an American film like that distributed here through a major distributor.

**And what about "Picnic at Hanging Rock"?**

Now with **Picnic** we are executive producers—co-executive producers—and one of the investors. One of the other investors, GUO Film Distributors, have the Australian distribution rights. That was all pre-arranged.

As far as the overseas distribution rights go the producers, **Picnic Productions**, have the negotiating rights for all overseas deals, providing they confer with the three investors. So the South Australian Film Corporation to that degree is involved.

When deals are put to us, we work very closely—the producers, the Film Corporation, the Film Commission and GUO—because we believe **Picnic** has a tremendous future overseas. There are a number of international distributors who want to see the film.

Interestingly enough people overseas know about **Picnic**. I am getting letters from around the

world asking what's happened about overseas distribution rights. They are not necessarily the major distributors, but the word is out about the film.

**As a government agency, the SAFC must be free from pressures to guarantee returns on their investments. When you involve private investors, do you encounter any conflict of interest?**

I don't consider the job I am doing is one for a government agency. I would be distressed and rather apprehensive if I found that feature films were made here with all government funds—state government funds. This hasn't been the case in any of the feature films we have made and I hope it won't be in the future.

The corporation is supposed to create an industry here, and obviously to create an industry you need to attract private money. It's not going to be funded by the state government on a loan basis forever. If you are going to make a \$500,000 film and you can attract \$300,000 privately—either locally or overseas—then you are only spending \$200,000 and you have brought \$300,000 into South Australia. I think this is absolutely essential.

If we can't get anybody interested in investing in a particular film, I think the corporation has to look very carefully at its reasons for

going into it. Otherwise it would simply mean that nobody bothered. At the moment the Corporation is pursuing a very active policy to go out and get investors interested in investing in South Australian film.

**Has anything ever been scrapped because you couldn't raise money outside?**

No, nothing has been scrapped to my knowledge. Gil Brealey turned down an enormous amount of scripts that have come to us from outside, because he felt they were not right for us to make for one reason or another. The international ratio is about nine projects failing somewhere along the line, while one goes forward into production.

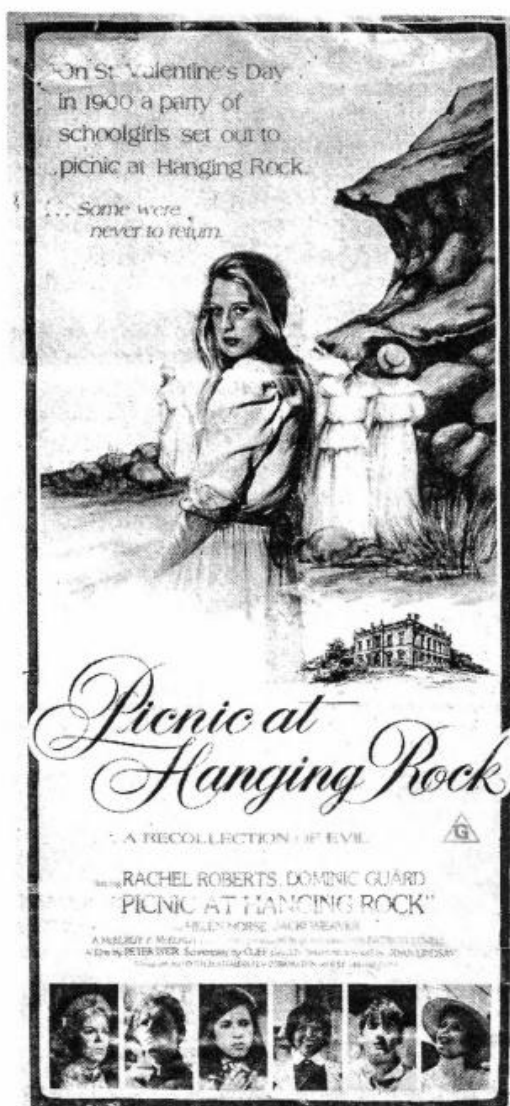
**Would that be consistent with your experience here?**

We haven't really reached that stage yet. We have a tremendous number of properties that are in developmental stages.

**I have observed that the SAFC is very much a team process—something which is not obvious from the outside...**

I think it ought to be a team effort. It's got to be, and I would suggest that major producers in the U.S. and Britain should work the same way.





We buy the rights to a book, we give the writer a contract to develop a script to first draft, in consultation with the producer who advises to, say, play down the sex, or build up the action — or whatever he wants.

The first draft might not fulfil what the producer wants. If the communication doesn't seem to be happening, then we would take that first draft, finish the contract with that first writer and develop it with another writer.

But that doesn't happen very often. What happens more frequently is that a script will be developed by one writer to a fairly advanced stage, and depending on whether you agree with the principle of script editing, professional script editing — and I happen to believe that it's absolutely vital — then the script will be edited, usually in conjunction with the writer.

**Do you think this kind of multi-faceted production endangers creative involvement? Many script-writers and filmmakers need to be more involved...**

I agree with that, but let's take each individual feature. *Sunday Too Far Away* was conceived and written from first to final draft by one writer. Then he and the director worked on the final shooting script.

But there are always disagreements between writers and directors — this scene should be in, that

scene out — that's two creative people. *Picnic at Hanging Rock* was written from start to finish by Cliff Green, so that's a one-man job.

**The work here appears very much geared towards commercial projects...**

I would argue with that. If you had seen the original scripts of *Sunday Too Far Away* and *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, you would probably have agreed with a number of people — including, in the case of *Sunday*, the old AFDC — that they were totally non-commercial ideas. You wouldn't have said they had any of the accepted commercial ingredients, such as sex or violence.

I think the greatest single corporation achievement has been that we, of all people, have been able to prove that the Australian public not only wants, but accepts and will go in droves to films that have artistic integrity — films that would not be considered violent or sexy.

**Are you working on any projects for television at the moment?**

We have developed two ideas for television series, for which we are seeking international co-financing. One is a family half-hour program about a group of teenagers who are centred around a gym—a re-think of our original idea of *Stacey's Gym*. I took a pilot episode overseas last year and was amazed

at how many territories were interested in it. They said, particularly the Scandinavian countries, here at last is a program for the 12 to 18 age group that is talking about children's problems from a children's point of view in a realistic fashion. It's not all cops and robbers where Skippy comes to the rescue.

Then there is an idea we are developing around the German settlers in the Barossa Valley up to and during World War I, in which we are hopeful of getting German interest. We are also selling *The Fourth Wish*, our latest feature film. There is also a lot of selling work still to be done on *Sunday Too Far Away*.

**In establishing the SAFC, the South Australian government obviously hopes to establish Adelaide as a filmmaking centre. Do you see Adelaide as the future Hollywood of the Australian film industry?**

Anything is possible. I believe we have many of the ingredients to do just that. We have diversity of locations, excellent filming weather...

Without question the Film Corporation and the whole arts scene here are attracting more and more people into the state and back to the state. A creative industry really feeds off itself and even in the three years I have been here the whole feel of Adelaide has been changing. Without the government's vision to

create the South Australian Film Corporation there would be no more activity here than there is in Perth.

**If we could turn finally to your position with the AFC. What precisely is your function there? Does it conflict with your work here?**

No, I don't think so. I think the part-time commissioners were picked because they had specialist knowledge in one or other areas. Tony Buckley and I are probably the only two of all the full-time and part-time commissioners who are fully involved with filmmaking and film production on a day-to-day basis.

I think they probably picked the two of us because we had direct daily contact with a fairly wide cross section of the film industry on a working level. Frank Gardiner, who is the other part-time commissioner, is a barrister and is involved directly in exhibition; Graham Burke, the other, is managing director of a big distribution company which has links in film production.

I believe I am on the AFC because I am a working member of the film industry at a grass roots level. I don't see the two functions conflicting. I don't feel I would have been asked to serve on the Commission if in fact I wasn't involved in the industry — directly involved in the industry. ★



# 'Entertainment is Big Business'

## THE PDGA SEMINAR 1976

Graham Shirley

The broadest aim of the Producers and Directors' Guild of Australia seminar, "Entertainment is big business — let's invest in it," held during the weekend of October 30-31 in Sydney, was to provide greater communal awareness among film, television and theatre producers, writers, directors and actors, of the need for increased industry unity. It is timely, considering the fact that all three media are undergoing great change.

For the film people, discussion most often concerned itself with attracting investment, either with or without the AFC, and building on the beginning of an international market. For those on television, it was a question of improving quality for local consumption and export. And for the theatre people, key points of concern were new ways to rationalize operations, while allowing more scope for Australian drama.

The brainchild of PDGA treasurer Maureen Walsh and the president, Kip Porteous, "Entertainment is big business" is the latest move in the organization's increasingly active campaign for industry reform over the last decade. Ten years ago the Guild was restructured as a company limited by guarantee, and whatever traces of elitism that survive the pre-1966 days have now been significantly reduced. From the mid-60s, the PDGA has drawn its membership from a broad spectrum of entertainment areas, and has striven to achieve closer unity between producers, industry union and craft guilds, and the investment sector. Any suggestion that the PDGA be re-formed as a union has been resisted.

Many of the basic industry ills revealed at the seminar dated from at least as far back as the never-enforced film and television industry's Vincent Report\* of 1962-3. In fact the familiarity of many of the bugbears gave rise to one of the seminar's resolutions, calling as it did for the present Federal government to debate the Vincent Report which more than a decade before had been tabled, then conveniently shelved by the Menzies government.

Shortly after the shelving, the PDGA organized a three-day seminar attended by a large representation of Australian film and television industry, political and community groups. The sole resolution of that seminar (held in Easter 1963) was to demand that the House of Representatives debate the report.

In spite of the seminar's attendance by groups as disparate as the Liberal and Labor parties, the Catholic church, the Waterside Workers' Federation, the Country Women's Association, and such notables as Albert Monk,

Prof. Alan Stout, Morris West, Frank Hardy, Jim Cairns and Ted St. John, the call went unheeded by the press and the parliamentarians that mattered.

The report contained provision for many aids in the form of loans, quotas, tax relief and other incentives for investment — provisions which (this late October weekend) were still being demanded at the recent seminar. Many of the old arguments were given a new veneer by the cautious semi-euphoria of the recent success in feature films.

Writing in *Quadrant*, in December 1969, Sylvia Lawson said: "In other countries locally-oriented film comment is about actual films; here it is about the industry, or rather the non-industry." At the "Entertainment" seminar, the discussion was not only with titles, but with such questions as national identity in film, which, it should be pointed out, were on less sure ground when thoughts turned toward commercial television. Many of the senior producers spoke persuasively in support of compelling overseas distributor/exhibitors to reveal their grosses and export earnings, while those younger and apparently more confident said that the last decade's weakening of overseas interests made their accountability far less relevant and worthwhile. Mention of the need for subsidy rose frequently, as it always had during detailed submissions on the film industry's future. And interestingly, the demand for television quota legislation ignored the quantity points system in favor of a unanimous call for investment quotas.

Most speakers on television were at a loss when the discussion focused on the use of national elements and export marketing. Realizing that current Australian television provided fewer opportunities than the feature film area for personal expression, they implied that national identity in programs for export could at best be synthetic or diluted enough to be almost non-existent.

The seminar's more specific aim then was to discover ways in which the entertainment industry could integrate more closely to attract investment from the private sector. Discussion of artistic form was limited to its worth as a commercial prospect, with increased quality being urged, particularly in the area of television. The importance of unity between film, television and theatre was also discussed with the future prospect of politicizing industry requirements and negotiating cost increases. At least one speaker, Harry M. Miller, said television and film's present fragmentation in these areas could stunt the growth of both industries.

One immediate object was for the seminar to provide a direct industry proposal to the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister in the Arts, Tony Staley, who officially opened

proceedings at a Friday night cocktail party. The seminar was also expected to provide the PDGA with guidelines for action. In this regard, the most significant resolution called for the running of a follow-up seminar in about six months. The second seminar, which is intended to lure Australian and overseas investment, should be able to operate quite effectively if it makes use of the greater awareness which emerged at the first.

During the recent seminar, five panels presented and sometimes found themselves debating the extent of their knowledge in the areas of film and television cost increases, investment incentive, film and television exports, Australian television quotas, and the (predicted) future of Australian theatre. Not every speaker stuck strictly to his or her allocated subject. So, for the purposes of identifying more clearly the leading issues, I have condensed and divided the content of dialogue into seven major areas. The submissions that emerged appear at the end.

### COST INCREASES 'ARE WE PRICING OURSELVES OUT OF THE BUSINESS'

Chair: Ric Birch

Panel: Charles Wolnizer... Producer — APA-Leisuretime  
Doug Dove... Chief Executive—Colorfilm Pty Ltd  
Brian Wright... President—Australian Writers' Guild  
John Barry... John Barry Group of Companies  
Roger Mirams Independent T.V. and Film Producer

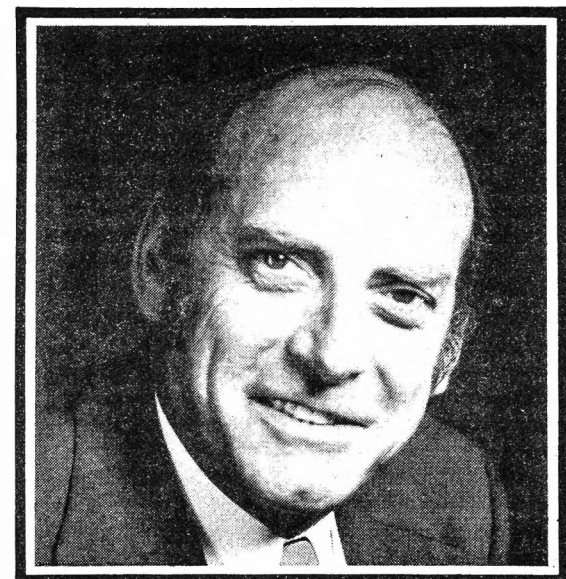
### FILM AND TELEVISION AS INVESTMENT 'INVESTMENT INCENTIVES FOR THE BUSINESSMAN'

Chair: Michael Robertson

Panel: Tom Stacey... Air Programmes International  
Harry M. Miller... Harry Miller Enterprises  
Robert Kirby... Hexagon Pty. Ltd.  
Paul Riomfalvy... Chairman — NSW Interim  
Film Commission  
John Daniell... Director of Project Development  
Branch, Australian Film Commission

#### (i) Private investment

Quoting film and television as "the toughest business in the world," Charles Wolnizer said many businessmen, such as himself, would be attracted to invest in production if guaranteed a percentage of a film's gross, rather than its nett earnings. Wolnizer said he regarded even 50 per



Key industry figures at this years PDGA seminar.

\* The Report of the Senate Select Committee on the Encouragement of Australian Production for Television.



cent of the net as 50 per cent of nothing.

Harry Miller, having announced his plan to produce a \$2¼ million film adaptation of Patrick White's *Voss*, said most of the world's businessmen were reluctant to invest in film because the industry lacked the required degree of business initiative and know-how. Paddy McGuinness, speaking as part of a later panel, said he was impressed at the business capability of Australian producers, some of whom outshine their counterparts in more conventional undertakings. He said: "To be able to perform well in business and the arts is unusual and rare."

Robert Kirby warned Australian production interests against striving for too much too soon, while stating that the confidence of Hexagon's investors could always be engendered by the presence of the AFC as a partner. Kirby said that Hexagon, in a package sale of six of the company's features, had returned investors 150 per cent on their original money.

Many voices of concern and caution were raised on the first two topics. Members of later panels accused the early speakers of inducing too much gloom, with Paddy McGuinness in particular referring to the "old whingeing approach which characterizes Australian industry from top to bottom," and Paul Riomsfalvy stating that neither investors nor public could be made any more receptive by the entertainment industry's tales of domestic woe. But any mention of cost and investment in a seminar such as this would have been unrealistic without some indication of the pitfalls.

The general consensus on cost was that producers, during the past three years, have been spending ever-increasing amounts of money, with the result of decreasing nett returns. Charles Wolnizer of APA said that Australian production costs were now equal to those in other countries. John Barry gave some indication of the shape of things to come by stating that the hire of film production equipment was now 15 per cent higher than it was in the U.S., Britain, and Europe.

Speaking from a laboratory viewpoint, Doug Dove said that inflation boosted costs and prices at the rate of 30 per cent per annum. About 55 per cent of the lab's annual revenue would normally be ploughed into raw stock and labor costs; this expenditure has risen dramatically.

Brian Wright said film and television writers were anything but pricing themselves out of the business, and a significant number were still being urged by producers to prepare pre-investment research and treatment without guarantee of eventual payment.

## (ii) The role of government.

The panel generally agreed that the profit-sharing relationship between the AFC and producers was far from ideal. Tom Stacey (former head of the now defunct Australian Film Development Corporation) said subsidy rather than direct investment from the Commission would be a more effective way of attracting investment. Harry Miller said the AFC's share of 75 per cent of a film's nett returns is inflicting a "Hoover job" on independent producers. He said film producers were being "squeezed up" by the AFC's percentage demand, and that potentially even the strongest were not being given the chance they needed to survive and help develop the industry. Taking the opposite stance to Robert Kirby, when it came to the AFC and private investment, Miller said the Commission at the moment could do little to attract the private investor.

John Daniell said recent AFC investment projects had attracted an increasing number of private investors, and that while he admitted limitations to the producer from the Commission's profit split, the AFC was willing to renegotiate the percentage if the producer could prove that other agreements were likely to leave him with less than his normal share of 25 per cent.

Speaking as part of the next panel, Paul Landa (representing the NSW Premier, Mr. Neville Wran, as government spokesman on the NSW Interim Film Commission) said, the NSW government would adopt an 'angel' and marketing role in the production of film. This will include their fully promoting and marketing feature films which contain state investment, and advising, where necessary, on films made without government money.

The Government hopes the proposed corporation will sidestep, as much as possible, those projects that are inadequately developed or otherwise "ill-advised," and feels that the overseas marketing of Australian films is essential for recoupment and continued production.

## EXPORT MARKETING 'ENTERTAINMENT AS AN EXPORT'

Chair: Tom Jeffrey  
Panel: Paul Landa ..... NSW Minister for Planning and Environment

Lee Robinson ..... Independent Producer  
Hal McElroy ..... Independent Producer  
Mende Brown ..... Producer/Director —  
APA-Leisuretime  
Robert Bruning ..... Independent Producer  
Paddy McGuinness ..... Correspondent

Discussion of film and television exports brought a far more optimistic outlook than that of the earlier panels. One presumes this is because the potential for overseas marketing of Australian output has, on the surface at least, seemed frequently more assured than the raising of capital. Yet, as stated earlier, feature film producers now seem more assured of the international marketing formula than those in television.

As an independent producer, predominantly for television, Roger Mirams told the seminar that the U.S. market "doesn't want to know about anything they don't produce themselves"; and was contradicted in a claim by Lee Robinson that any program of sufficient quality and produced for a pre-determined market could sell in the U.S., or in any other country with a similar demand.

Quoting the international acceptance of his company's *Skippy* series, Robinson said the producer aiming for success overseas should think internationally and observe international rules. Too many Australian producers, he said, were economising on time and money by making programs solely for local consumption.

Hal McElroy said local elements of greatest appeal to overseas markets were those with which audiences could identify and not experience from any other country. Both McElroy and television producer Mende Brown claimed that the future of international marketing was in the employment of "honorable agents" who negotiated the best terms within prescribed territories.

Reviving comment on national identity in film, Paddy McGuinness said, after initial indifference to Australia's early 70s sex comedies, overseas audiences were now willing to accept sophistication in national self-consciousness through films like *Picnic At Hanging Rock* and *Caddie*. Placed in its historical context, *Alvin Purple* is seen by McGuinness as an attempt to impose Australian overtones on top of a bid for the soft porn market; but neither had it been "good porn, nor was it Australian, in spite of the accents".

*Caddie*, in McGuinness' opinion, has been the first local film to give audiences an Australian accent which is both normal and universally comprehensible. The film's other appeal, he



From left: John Barry, Managing Director of the John Barry Group of Companies; Harry Miller, entrepreneur; Charles Wolnizer, managing director of APA — Leisuretime; and Hal McElroy, independent producer.



said, was in its dealing with eternal problems in an urban environment.

## AUSTRALIAN CONTENT FILM, TELEVISION AND THEATRE

(The remainder of this report now departs from the order of subject prescribed by the seminar, and has been split into headings that best serve the leading issues that emerged. Because this report takes a film and television standpoint, not all the theatre statements have been included.) The remaining panelists were as follows:

Milton Watson . . . Independent television producer/director  
Julie James-Bailey . . . . . Researcher,  
writer and producer  
James Malone . . . . . Federation of Australian  
Commercial Television Stations  
Ian Cochrane . . . . . Television Producer —  
Education  
Paul Riomfalvy . . . . . Representative of  
J. C. Williamson  
Ken Horler . . . . . Producer, Nimrod Theatre

Considering that demands for an Australian film quota have on many occasions been the springboard for producers' lobbying, surprisingly little was aired on the issue.

Two speakers in favor based their suggestions on the assumption that only with the assistance of quota legislation could Australian audiences become fully accustomed to their national film output.

Discussion of television quotas was far better served. Most speakers, whether projecting reformist or establishment viewpoints, favored the setting up of an investment quota whose quality requirements would provide for the expenditure of more time and care in areas like scriptwriting, rehearsals and actual filming or taping. Those who spoke as television producers had for the most part been frustrated by the lack of courage and fresh initiative at commercial management levels.

Much of the talk on Australian theatre revolved around the need for Australian theatre to shed its 'Great White Way' illusions so often characteristic of attempts to re-create the days of mass audience appeal. The need for closer links between modern commercial and sponsored theatre was stressed, and also for commercial managements to be taking a more positive approach on the staging of Australian plays.

But back to television . . .

Milton Watson, an independent producer of television variety programs, proved to be one of

the seminar's more concerned and highly critical speakers. Having recently made a high-quality variety program, Watson has been told by local network executives that Australian content is of little importance in the current scheme of operations, for the stations' advertising revenue has been fully paid up to March of next year. Watson said programs made under an Australian investment quota would need to be both entertaining and educational, and this could strongly redeem the values of a public gluttonously over-fed on American "fantasy".

Julie James-Bailey spoke in favor of an investment quota when she revealed that the commercial channels' total collective revenue from television commercials in 1971 was about \$151 million, and that by the end of this year the figure would have risen by a further \$50 million. Comparing these figures with the AFC's \$1 million investment budget for the current year, she said commercial television networks had ample scope to spend both more time and money in upgrading local content.

James Malone, spokesman for the Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations, stressed that FACTS likewise favored an investment quota, and that hopefully it would enable the emergence of more experimentation and programming diversification. Presumably, a more authentic local tradition would result from the greater time taken in preparing and producing programs, though the importance of quality would far outweigh any overt consideration for distinctly Australian elements. Malone said he had yet to know "what an 'Australian' program is".

The need for an increased local output of educational films was stressed by Ian Cochrane, former director of production at the Videotape Corporation and now teacher of advertising at the Sydney Technical College. Cochrane said the film and television industry — PDGA in particular — should educate the educators to think more in terms of the value of local content. He said that out of 3000 title entries in an educational film catalogue currently circulating Australia, only 9 per cent are of local origin.

Speaking for J.C. Williamson's theatrical interests, Paul Riomfalvy, said the revamped JCW were interested in Australian content, not for purely patriotic, but for significantly financial reasons. JCW have now commissioned work from playwright Ron Blair, and they hope to complement a growing commitment to local drama with the promotion of a stronger Australian 'star' tradition.

Nimrod Theatre producer Ken Horler criticized the Australian commercial theatre's neglect to date of Australian content, and implied that JCW's venture into this area could be read both as commercial theatres cashing-in on an area which for a long time only subsidized theatre had the courage to embrace, and as part of the overall closer proximity between the aims and activity of the commercial and subsidized companies. (A while later, Prof. Robert Quenton said: "Nobody used the term 'commercial theatre' until it started getting into trouble. Before that it was just 'theatre'.")

Horler said he was unable to understand why Australian film and television interests were not making increased use of at least the 12 good local writers capable of achieving success in theatre.

## INDUSTRY UNITY

Horler's comment was not the seminar's first call for closer unity between film, television and theatrical production interests. Most comments in this direction were aimed at closer bonding within film and television, and here it was felt that PDGA might play a vital role.

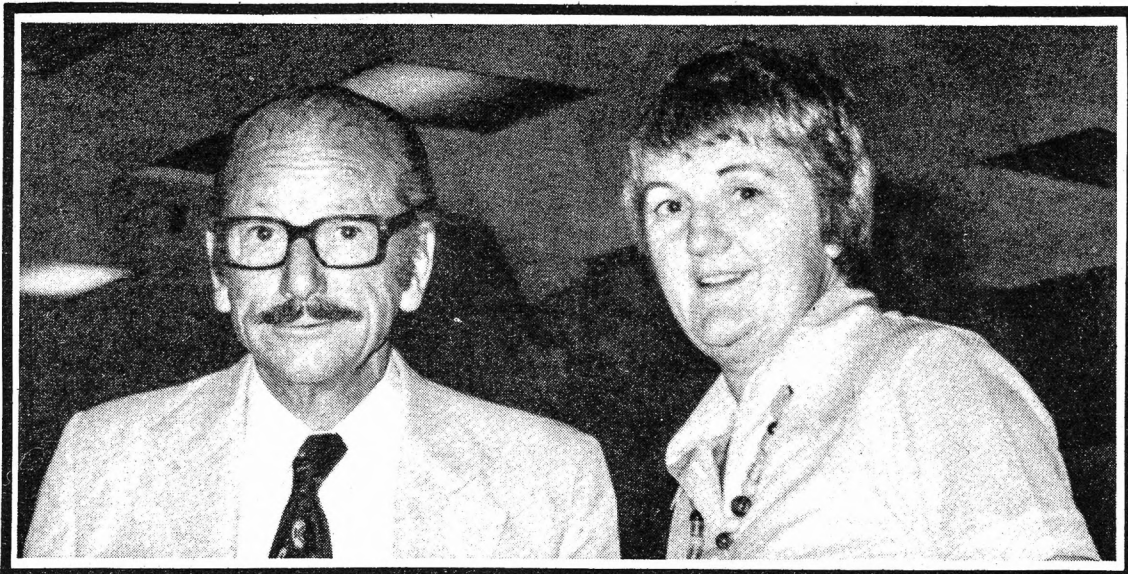
Early in the seminar, Harry Miller said that when it came to negotiating fees or politicizing broader demands, film and television production interests were fragmented in a way rarely evident in theatre. In the face of the needs of investment attraction and increasing union demands, Miller said a continuation of this aloof stance would not augur well for the industry's future.

Milton Watson, as part of his seven-point plan covering standards and production quotas, stressed that PDGA set up a sub-committee of its more senior members to advise junior members on the viability of script concepts and packaging; while Julie James-Bailey made several suggestions to provide an answer to the television industry's lack of a "long view".

Television, she said, needed much broader input from allied fields of entertainment, and the television medium itself should serve a greater amount of its own experimental and training needs, along with those of film and theatre. Once again, PDGA was encouraged to play a dominant role in the unification, and the ultimate result might be a stronger political base for the entertainment industry.

## TAXATION

- (i) Profit concessions: Most opinions were against tax concessions for the filmmaker, generally on the assumption that it was either an insignificant, or at best temporary, cure to the industry's foreseeable financial problems, or that the prospect of explaining the uniqueness of the film industry's requirements to taxation authorities was more trouble than it was worth. Paddy McGuinness said there were strong arguments against tax concessions, but they would have to be specially viewed by the authorities in the context of film. John Daniell of the AFC reported that a film industry submission on the tax question was being prepared for the consideration of the Myer committee in Canberra.
- (ii) Cinema admissions: At least three of the speakers who advised tampering with income taxation were still in favor of a tax on cinema admissions which could subsequently be fed as subsidy to production in much the same way that Eady Money is dispensed in Britain.



Organizers of the "Entertainment is Big Business" Seminar, PDGA president Kip Porteos and treasurer Maureen Walsh.

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# 'The Man in the Black Car'



"There is a lesson for Australia . . . have tight units working inexpensively making films, which for the most part won't have any world-wide names. Then you can recoup in the home country and still hope for the big break internationally."



Margot Nash

## SAMUEL Z. ARKOFF

How did it come about that someone with your background became involved in the very early days of television?

Well, in the air force, during World War 2, I met a young fellow named Hank McCuen and I helped him put on some soldier shows. He was very visionary about television even in those early days.

Anyway, when I took my Law degree in 1948 I worked for him in Los Angeles for no money; at the same time as I was working in a law office. Finally, in 1950, we managed to sell National Broadcasting Corporation the first filmed television series. Those were the days of the live shows, like *Philco Playhouse*; till then nothing had been on film.

We had \$5500 a week to make a 30-minute film, and we did it by working non-union. The unions were in the more established fields of radio and television, and in theatrical films, but television film was still a no-man's land. So we managed to make them, and when you have only \$5500 a week to

Samuel Z. Arkoff is president and chairman of the board of American International Pictures, the highly successful production-distribution company founded by him and the late James H. Nicholson in 1954. Over the past 22 years he has been responsible for the introduction of a host of new crazes into the film industry — from teen musicals to horror, bikie and drug opuses. Arkoff's Australian distributor, Roadshow, labeled October as "Sam Arkoff Month", and initiated a big sales drive of AIP releases. To top off the celebrations, Arkoff made his first trip to Australia, where in Melbourne he spoke with *Cinema Papers* contributing editor Antony I. Ginnane.

spend, you learn to be a producer.

At the same time, as a struggling lawyer I was representing probably every young, aspiring producer that was around, and I would take points in their productions in lieu of fees. In 1952, I had a client who contended that Jack Brouthers, a fellow who was handling reissues, had stolen a title. Now really, you can't steal a title, but I went over to see Jack Brouthers anyway, knowing that I didn't have any solid ground to stand on. Jack brought out his title-man, the fellow who did

all their advertising, and it turned out to be Jim Nicholson.

Jim had been in exhibition for years. Through illness he had lost the four theatres he owned, so he was back temporarily with Jack Brouthers. Jim swore that he had thought of the title independently, but Jack wrote out a \$500 settlement cheque anyway, which was pretty amazing, because Jack was a known skinflint.

After that Jim and I became very friendly and in 1954 we decided that the time was ripe to set up an in-

dependent distribution company. We called it American Releasing Corporation and a year later changed the name to American International Pictures. We had no offices, so we used states righters<sup>1</sup> and so-called franchise holders.<sup>2</sup> We set it up for \$3000 and started with one of Roger Corman's films.

How did you meet Corman?

I first met him in 1953. We were aware that he had made a little film called *Monster from the Ocean Floor* for about \$20,000, and we knew he was dissatisfied with the way his distributor had handled it. So we approached him to let us distribute it. We took Roger around, got some advances from our

1. Since the 1950s small American independent distributors and producers have used individual distributors — states righters — to operate for them in certain States, thereby saving costs on expensive branch offices.
2. Small American independent distributors have operated on a global basis by assigning exclusive distribution rights for their product to local distributors who are called franchise holders.



# HORROR...

From  
the depths  
of time  
and space!



Invasion of the Saucer-Men



The Day the World Ended



The Tomb of Ligeia.



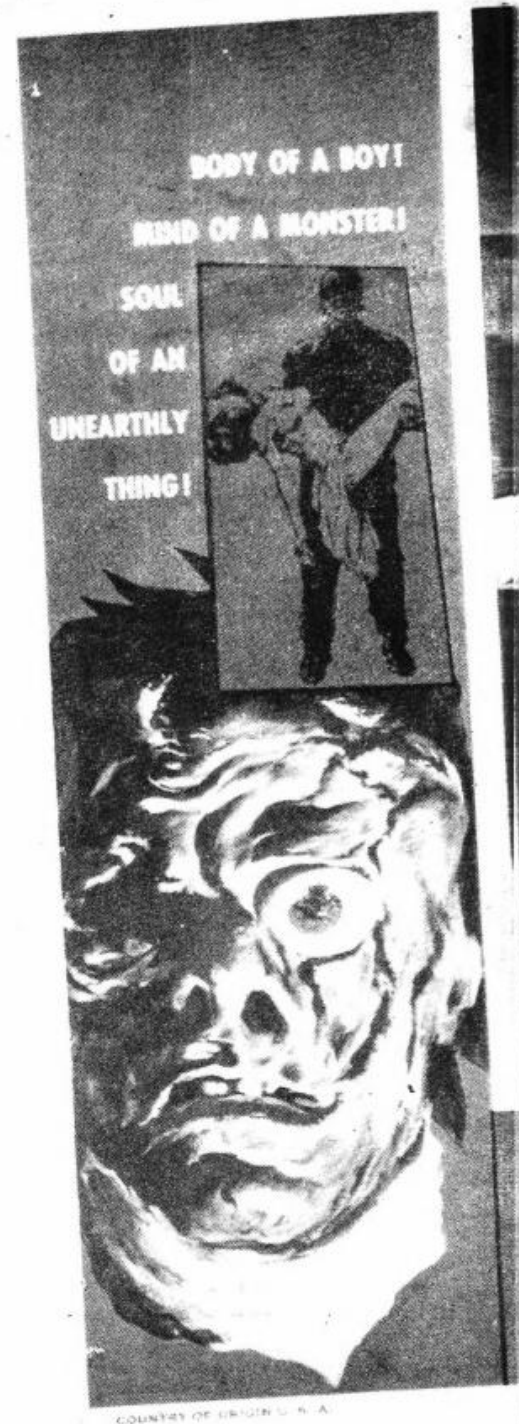
Charles Bronson in Machine Gun Kelly.



Peter Fonda (centre) in The Wild Angels.



Publicity graphic for A Small Town in Texas.



Shelley Winters in Bloody Mama

franchise holders, and were off. I won't say we were running, but we were at least crawling.

First *Guns West* came next and did okay. But by then we could see that we were not going to get enough films to distribute unless we made them ourselves. So, by a combination of financing from the laboratories, advances from franchise holders, and deferments from everybody, we made our first production, *Apache Woman*, which Roger did for us. That film didn't break even for 10 years, but within a few months we realized that since we had no strength in the market place we couldn't afford to rely on films that only cost \$100,000 to make — and that was in color!

We were only going to get shot down into the second feature bracket and get the low end of the flat price scale. So we resolved to make two films of a similar type, put them together in a combination, and hell and high water not split them till we got the whole bill. That's what we did.

The first one we made for a combination was *The Day the World Ended*, but we didn't have enough

money at that time to make a second one. So we got a couple of editors who had some investors to make *The Phantom from 10,000 Leagues* and we put those two together.

**What was the shooting schedule on a film like that?**

Two weeks. In those days a week was six days. Jim and I each had a certain function: he was the guy in the white car and I was the guy in the black car. Jim would stay on the set and I would keep right away, until by about the 11th day the word would come that we were running behind and were going to be over budget and over time. That was when I would make my black-car entry. I would call for the writer and the director and I would say, okay gentlemen, now we have to cut a certain number of pages out of the script. I realize that it stamps me irrevocably as a philistine, but that was one way we brought them in, and I would say without exception that on dozens of films we didn't go over.

We also disproved the belief that

only big films could make it, and we did with what you could call exploitation films, where you didn't need names. Although if you look back Jack Nicholson started with us and must have been in 10 or a dozen of ours; we had Bruce Dern, Touch Connors, Charlie Bronson — but in those days nobody knew who they were.

Our scripts were all originals: my brother-in-law must have written 40 of them. We also had a very good, tightly-knit unit. I think that was the secret of it, and I would suggest that there is a lesson for Australia there: to have tight units working inexpensively making films, which for the most part won't have any world-wide names. Then you can recoup in the home country and still hope for the big break internationally.

**In the early sixties AIP started handling importations...**

Actually, the change came in 1958. We had taken over the master lease on the old Charlie Chaplin studio.





# I WAS A TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN

starring  
**WHIT BISSELL - PHYLLIS COATES**  
**ROBERT BURTON - GARY CONWAY**  
Produced by  
**HERMAN COHEN**  
Directed by  
**HERBERT L. STROCK - KENNETH LANCERY**  
A JAMES H. NICHOLSON - SAMUEL Z. ARKOFF PRODUCTION  
AN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL PICTURE

57-600

In 1958 we made 22 films in Hollywood, which means 11 combinations, and by this time we began to think that we had found the golden formula. Except for our beginning films like *Apache Woman* (which was still recouping) we hadn't lost any money on any film — which, as you know, defies the law of gravity, among other things. So by '58 other independents had plunged in and were making the same type of films. We had made classics like *I was a Teenage Frankenstein*, which starred Michael Landon of *Bonanza* in his first film, and so on. But by the summer of 1958 the bottom dropped out: there were too many films of that particular type.

So by early '59 we managed to get rid of the studio lease, because no sooner did we move into that studio than there was a studio strike. Along came Red Skelton, who wanted to buy that lot. We didn't own it, we only had the master lease, but he bailed us out (and damn near bailed himself in).

Jim and I headed off to Italy, because Joseph E. Levine, our franchise holder in Boston, was about to sign *Hercules*. We had

heard about these sword and sandal strongman films and we bought two, one of them finished and called *The Sign of Rome*, starring Anita Ekberg.

I discovered from reading some history, that in the later days of the Roman empire, when the Romans' brains and brawn were getting a little weak from too many carnivals, they used to fete slaves who had won in the arena. So it became *Sign of the Gladiator*, although we didn't have a gladiator in the whole film. In the dubbing we managed to establish this one particular man as a former gladiator who, if he lost, would find himself back in the ring.

The other one that we picked up was a Steve Reeves *Hercules* film. But Joe was about to come out with his Steve Reeves *Hercules* film, so we renamed *Hercules Goliath* in the dubbing and the film became *Goliath and the Barbarians*.

**Did you buy those films for the U.S. and Canada, or with other world territories in mind?**

We bought them for about half the world and then we gave them to others to distribute. In Australia,

*I was a Teenage Frankenstein*, part of AIP's horror line-up of the late 50s — before the bottom dropped out of the market and Arkoff moved on to the "Sword and Sandal Strongman" films.

we used MGM at one stage and later, Paramount.

The big problem in this general area was that most of those foreign salesman still thought they were royalty. You have to realize that after the war Americans thought they were the kings of the beasts. Their attitude in foreign territories was sometimes very arrogant and the foreign departments of the so-called major film companies behaved in much the same way.

They failed to realize that the youth rebellion had struck and that the arrival of television had changed the whole pattern of cinema attendance: except for certain films, old people were for the most part going to stay at home and now young people were going to make up the bulk of the theatre-going audience. So they kept on pushing those nice films like *The Vagabond King*. They didn't understand our films; they thought they were simply cheap and didn't push them.

**How did you get involved with Roadshow?**

Roadshow was the greatest thing that ever happened to us in Australia, because Rock Kirby understood the kind of films we were making. He was bright and alert and upcoming, and not just a paid employee; he knew what was happening to the cinema audience, which now consisted primarily of people under 30 years of age. Linking up with Roadshow was a marriage of convenience: we had found a new upgoing company with a primarily drive-in base.

**What sort of deal did you have with Roadshow in the early days? Was it based on a fixed sum per film or advance and percentage?**

Well, Graham Burke came to New York, where our foreign department was located at the time, and he made a six-film deal for something like \$30,000 advance, and then promptly went back and all six were banned. Now that didn't stop him like it would have stopped Paramount or Metro; he started to work at it and he began to get films through. For example, our Edgar Allan Poe films, which had been down here before we went to Roadshow and had all been banned.

**How did you move from the Italian films, to the Poe films, to the beach films and then on to the bike and drug films? How did you pick the trends? Was it market research?**

In the first place I think there is a lot of so-called research that's absolute malarkey. I think I am basically a seat-of-the-pants man, but that's not quite as inexperienced and as inexact as it may sound. To begin with I run at least six films a week in my house; and when my kids were growing up I would have, depending on the film, 25 to 75 of their friends there watching; because no matter what anybody says, no matter how young you think you are, it's an illusion to think you know it all.

**Why did AIP go public in 1968, and what effect did it have on you?**

Well, I didn't really want to go public. AIP was in very good shape, but we had given two long-term employees some stock interest, and then Jim Nicholson unfortunately had to undergo a divorce settlement. The biggest asset he had was his AIP stock. So it was one of those things. I am still the biggest stockbroker by a tremendous amount and going public has not really affected me too much. It's a little more constraining, but it has not made that much difference.

**At around the same time that you went public Jim Nicholson died and Roger Corman moved away from AIP...**

*Continued on P. 286*



# A PAIN IN THE INDUSTRY?

Richard Brennan

Members of the Australian film industry exist in a perpetual state of tension and, until recently, a state of fierce mutual antagonism. It is not surprising really — becoming a film producer in Australia is probably somewhat easier than buying a gun in the U.S. Every other day some former used car salesman is announcing that he has just about clinched the rights to *Poor Fellow My Country*, and that Charles Bronson is so keen to play the lead that he is taking English lessons — along with the producer.

And so the breed proliferates — another group of people looking for a second group to pose as a third group, so that a fourth group can pretend to be held by the illusion. This fourth group of people will have many opportunities to exercise their credulity between December and February. *Barney*, *Break of Day*, *Deathcheaters*, *Don's Party*, *Mrs Eliza Fraser*, *Promised Woman*, *Raw Deal*, *Storm Boy* and *Summer of Secrets* will all be parading their wares at a time when audiences have decreased, but the Australian success stories — *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *Caddie* and *The Devil's Playground* are going through the roof.

Of these films, *Mrs Fraser*, *Break of Day* and to a lesser extent *Summer of Secrets* — which

Richard Brennan is a film producer. His credits include: *Homesdale*, *The Office Picnic*, *Promised Woman*, *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* (production manager), *The Great McCarthy* (associate producer), *The Removalists*, *The Trespassers*, *Mad Dog Morgan* (associate producer), and *Deathcheaters* (associate producer).

has not gambled on an overseas star name — signal a shift in thinking towards considerably larger budgets than *Alvin Purple*, *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* and *Stone*. And in 1977 this trend will continue with *The Picture Show Man*, *The Last Wave*, *Summerfield*, *The Mango Tree* and *The Irishman*.

It will be an unhappy situation if at least one of the films at the other end of the financial spectrum is not successful. The Australian industry has supported a number of 'gentleman' directors who have made one unsuccessful attempt at a feature and have disappeared back to Paddington or Carlton. Their failures have been partially compensated within the Film Commission, at least by the successes of other films. This is not going to be possible on budgets of \$500,000 and upwards. Nor will it signal the death of the breed.

If a producer has the rights to a potentially attractive property and wants to gamble on a director's first try at a feature, who is to gainsay him? The result may be *Caddie*, *Sunday Too Far Away*, or *The Devil's Playground*.

The fact that the candidate has spent 10 years dodging writ servers in Darwin, or has an overdeveloped taste for cucumber sandwiches at Sunday luncheons, may signal a hint that he is not Martin Scorsese, but the field is small and new faces have to be gambled on.

At the time of writing, Tim Burstall, Bruce Beresford, Terry Bourke, Tom Cowan, Ken Hannam, Richard Franklin, Brian Trenchard Smith, Mike Thornhill and Peter Weir comprise the currently employed members of the industry



who have directed more than one 35mm feature. Of these all but Ken Hannam, who is a former ABC director, have backgrounds in low budget filmmaking.

Since 1968 they have directed 22 features, screened in 35mm; another 17 — local in origin — have also appeared. Filmmaking is a demanding occupation which needs considerable stamina of those participating at all levels. There are curiously few crew members over 40 currently involved in production. This is due to the demanding nature of the work and also faddism.



Peter Weir's *The Cars That Ate Paris*, one of the few venturesome Australian features.



Grant Page earning his share of the profits in Brian Trenchard Smith's *Deathcheaters*.





Mrs Eliza Fraser, signalling a shift in thinking toward substantially larger budgets.

Australia doesn't support stock companies comparable to those used by John Ford and Ingmar Bergman. At the end of a shoot it is not uncommon to hear a producer say that he hopes to have the same crew available for his next production. Should the continuity of labor be as high as one-third it would be exceptional.

At a time when Australian producers are relatively better disposed towards one another than was the case two years ago, there is a burgeoning discontent among crews and distrust of producers. This has been a by-product of producer greed. The crew member is given no genuine participation in the film and the producer seeks to compensate for this with a champagne slate at the end of the first week and a blubbery end-of-shooting party. On *Deathcheaters*, the producer-director Brian Trenchard Smith spread 5 per cent of the producer's profit equally among the crew. Effectively this gives them .25 per cent of the return which, while not a large sum of money, is a considerable incentive to those involved.

A particularly damaging myth about the Australian industry is that there is virtually only one feature crew in Australia. I recently returned from overseas one day before commencing work on a film. A crew of 22 had been engaged — I had previously worked with only five of them. I wasn't overjoyed at the prospect of working with 17 people almost unknown to me, but in the event it was a very rewarding experience.

Some of the most sought after crew members in Australia are also the biggest pains in the arse — complacent, sulky and paranoiacally afraid of criticism. Others who work less frequently, because they are outside the club, or have just not worked with producers or directors who are able to provide continuity of work, are considerably more energetic, imaginative and involved. The only totally baseless criticism of the

current proliferation of features is that there are not enough technicians capable of fulfilling the demands put on them. There is a shortage of competent production managers and of designers, but otherwise it is a cornucopia.

The advisability of using overseas stars as an audience drawcard is moot and probably unresolvable. I have seen a criticism of the selection of Dennis Hopper to play in *Mad Dog Morgan*, but I don't think it could be sustained; not even the most virulently parochial critic has suggested that the power of the film does not derive substantially from his strange and brilliant performance. My first experiences with overseas performers were with Dennis Price and Peter Cook in *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie*. Their fees were not exorbitant, but I did not admire Cook's performance and was annoyed when many local critics preferred his work to that of Barry Crocker and Paul Bertram. On top of that I don't believe a large proportion of the audience were aware of his identity.

Australian audiences seem to respond warmly to the spectacle of local boys who have made good. I have heard them react loudly and favorably to Spike Milligan in *Bazza*, Bud Tingwell in *Petersen* and Nick Tait in *Devil's Playground*. For the same reasons I think the casting of Ray Barrett in *Don's Party* and Rod Taylor in *Picture Show Man* are shrewd moves. I doubt Dominic Guard's performance in *Picnic at Hanging Rock* increased its commercial potential; and Jimmy Wang Yu, his lack of charm in *Man From Hong Kong* is so relentless that I have heard audiences scream for Grant Page to kill him in their fight scene.

The real problem we face here is an unwillingness to experiment. In the past few years I think only *Dalmas*, *Cars That Ate Paris* and *Devil's Playground* have been really venturesome. The first two were not commercially successful, but they led the way to the critical suc-



Local boy made good: Ray Barrett in *Don's Party*.



Overseas star Dennis Hopper, a powerful element in Philippe Mora's *Mad Dog Morgan*.

cess of *Pure Shit* and the double success of *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. The prevailing blind faith that a genre — roughly described as "period" — will hold an inexhaustible fascination to the Australian public is as misguided as Hollywood's convictions in the early 60s that what the public wanted to see were epics.

Our production, scripting and directors' techniques are largely modelled on British methods — which is fine if you want to make British-type films with the look of another era. In part I would ascribe this to a producer failure to involve the crew in the success of the final product and his slavish desire to find successful precedents. Fred Schepisi held out against considerable opposition that *Devil's Playground* would need an eight-week shooting period to do the film justice. There is no doubt that the method worked for the film. But a *Dillinger* or a *Psycho*, shot over a prolonged period, would probably look rather slack.

A compressed shooting period can contribute considerable drive to a film — I suspect that a great part of the energy of *Pure Shit* derives from the fact that it was made in a hurry. By March or April a 1977 direction will have formed itself. Producers will be engaging cast and crews on the basis that this is "the big one" — the first Australian film to succeed on an international level (most of us have worked on at least six of these).

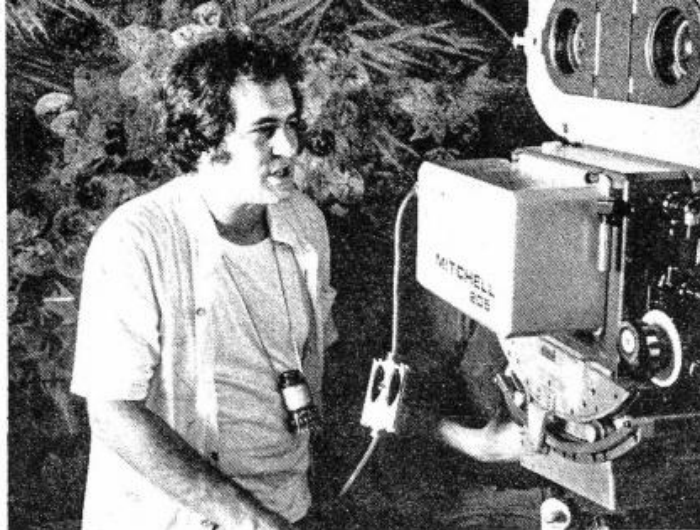
When that happens I hope investors will recall that the first such films from other countries were modest films like *Ashes and Diamonds*, *Rashomon*, *Memories of Underdevelopment* and *The Cranes are Flying*. Poland's most expensive film, *The Pharaoh*, Britain's lavish *Caesar and Cleopatra*, the Arabian film, *Night of Counting the Years* and Cacayonn's *Day the Fish Came Out*, simply illustrated that you could take the film out of the country, but you could not take the country out of the film. ★







# BERTOLUCCI'S 1900:



# STORMY BEGINNINGS

**Basil Gilbert**

In recent years, the young Italian film director, Bernardo Bertolucci, has been one of the main targets of film censorship in Italy. In January this year, his *Last Tango in Paris* was declared obscene and the court ordered all copies of the film in Italy to be "thrown to the flames". The judgement came after a delay of four years; *Last Tango*, with its rather pungent vocabulary (which included such words as "pig-fucker", a 'dirty' word actor Marlon Brando taught Bertolucci) first appeared to stunned audiences at the New York Film Festival in 1972.

The judgement was based on fascist-era laws that had originally been aimed at pornographic literature, but which were now being applied increasingly against films. However, the court did permit one copy of *Last Tango* to be stored in the national film archives in Rome, for the purposes of academic study.

The legal action did not stop with the sequestration of the film. Bertolucci and his producer, Alberto Grimaldi, as well as the principal leads in the film — Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider — were each given two-month suspended prison sentences.

Bertolucci and Grimaldi also learned that they had lost the right to vote at national elections in Italy for the next 10 years.

The news of Bertolucci's de-registration as a voter — which meant one less vote for the communists for 10 years — was preceded by even more disturbing news. The first part of his new historical epic *1900* had also been declared obscene by a Salerno magistrate and was immediately ordered off all screens throughout the

country. It had been running for less than three weeks, and only the day previously the second half of the 5 hour 24 minute "colossal" (as they call such films in Italy) had begun screenings at alternative cinemas. The public flocked to see the non-censored second half, fearing that it too might be censored. To cope with the demand, cities such as Rome and Milan ran it simultaneously at three cinemas.

The first part of *1900*, which in toto had cost the massive sum of \$6 million to produce, had been banned by the magistrate, after a complaint from a resident of that city. Professor Borraro, who ran the provincial library of Salerno, had seen the film in the company of his wife and 17-year-old daughter, Argentina, and they were shocked at what they saw. To them, the most distressing scene in the film was an episode which showed two men in bed with the one woman.

Professor Borraro, who won a gold medal for his contributions to "education, culture and art", was also shaken by a scene of Bof-type cunnilingus, where a young schoolmistress is seated on a basket of apples, in a barn that served as headquarters for the countryside communist "education faculty"; and finally, by a charming naive sequence where the young squire of the property stimulates his cousin Regina by the side of an elm tree, making use of the co-efficient of friction of the barrel of his old-fashioned sporting rifle.

In Italy, the banning of a film can mean economic disaster. Italians are still the world's most enthusiastic film buffs; even television when it was introduced in Italy, did not have the same decimating effect on cinemagoers as in France and Germany.

According to British journalist Peter Nichols, in the decade beginning in 1961, Italian cinemas lost some 200 million patrons — attendances falling from 741 million to 550 million — while in

Germany during the same period, there was a drop from 517 million to 180 million, and in France from 350 million to 190 million. So, with the banning of *1900* after such a short run, it seemed that Twentieth Century-Fox, the film's distributors in Italy, had backed a non-starter.

The day after the film was banned, the Italian press — especially the socialist papers — began a campaign of retaliation. The news of the event was front-page headlines in several papers. "An incredible repressive and censorious intervention", declared *L'Unita*, the official national daily of the Communist Party; "A Banning by Incompetents", complained Florence's *Paese Sera* in a double-column report; while the moderate *La Nazione* ran the sober headlines "1900 banned: Bertolucci Demoralised".

Many of the reports included a short personal statement by Bertolucci. It read (in part):

"Once upon a time, there was an Italian cinema with images and sounds which were brought to life in the dark ambience of the cinema through the re-creative imagination of the spectators... but a film is only a miserable fragment of celluloid when it is forbidden to be projected and viewed."

After commenting on the "physical and psychological impossibility" of launching a second campaign of words and actions against "obscurantist magistrates who cloak political repression under the label of obscenity", Bertolucci added:

"I believe the only thing left for an Italian filmmaker is the sad alternative of emigrating and working in a freer country; as long as Mussolini continues to be present in our life through the penal code."

This concluding paragraph, although it may have raised expectations in the hearts of some Americans and Australians (who could see Bertolucci setting off for Hollywood, Melbourne or Sydney), deeply touched many sensitive Italians. "I am sad to be an Italian when this state of affairs can exist in Italy," said a medical student friend.



1900: Burt Lancaster as Alfredo Berlinghieri, one of two opposing patriarchs.



The sadistic fascist bully Attila (Donald Sutherland) is executed by the peasants after the war.

Opposite: *1900*, expressing "love for the class that will win in the whole world, the working class".



Many newspapers then began running lengthy features on the ban with headlines such as, "The Winter Lasts 20 Years" — an oblique reference to the "dark winter of fascism" under Mussolini.

The Italian trade unions also gave their support to Bertolucci, as did numerous leading writers, critics and intellectuals. The general feeling was that a major political and social film was being denied access to the screen, on the pretext of being sexually offensive, at a time when Italian cinemas were overflowing with third-rate soft-core pornography and sadistic violence.

This point of view was underlined by the fact that Marco Ferreri's latest film, *L'Ultima Donna*, had been rated a non-obscene "work of art" by the film censor, even though it is an unabashed hymn to the male phallus and its limitations, culminating when actor Gerard Depardieu brutally mutilates himself with an electric breadknife.

Bertolucci's emigration statement was made on September 25, just one hour after he heard of the ban, but later in a statement to the

Turin daily *La Stampa*, he said that, although he was grateful for the overwhelming public response to the banning of the film, he had spoken in the heat of the moment and wished to correct some possible misunderstandings. He began by withdrawing the statement that he would be obliged to emigrate, and called for an end to the "mobilization of opinion" in his favor.

He added:

"I personally will not participate in any manifestations of solidarity because I emphatically believe in the uselessness of demonstrations, gatherings, assemblies, etc. I am very touched and grateful to all those who have expressed their anger in this fashion; but at the same time I am convinced that the only way is to entrust the management of this struggle for liberty of expression — decreed by the Constitution — to those, who more than anyone else, have the duty to serve and respect it; namely, the politicians seated in the parliament . . ."

"I believe that the struggle must be for total freedom of expression, including freedom for pornography. The reason is simple. An Italian adult, who from 18 years of age onwards has the right to vote and the right to strike, and who is obliged to perform military duties, is then regarded as a juvenile by these acts of censorship. He is

denied the right to choose the theatrical entertainment he wishes to see."

This was a surprisingly moderate statement for a 'revolutionary' filmmaker. The latter part of this argument is reasonable enough, but the earlier pious hope that the "Constitution-respecting" politicians in Rome would take any effective action could hardly be taken seriously. Italian politicians as a group have been described by one political observer as "a class apart . . . which has nothing to do with the world at large", and these "honorable gentlemen" (as they are called in the press) would hardly be likely to run to the aid of a radical young filmmaker who was causing unnecessary trouble. They had enough on their plates: the Italian Women's Liberation Movement was pressing its demands for abortion on request, violence was on the increase in Rome and Milan, unemployment was rising and the lira was falling. Soon however, their help was no longer needed, for the situation of 1900 suddenly changed. On September 27 the press reported that the right of the Salerno magistrate to ban the first part of the film was under challenge.

The film had been given a small public screening in August in the mountain holiday resort of Ortisei, high in the Dolomite region bordering Austria. In this quiet town, another Italian citizen had lodged a complaint on the grounds of the film's alleged immorality.

Ortisei is located in the Republic of Bolzano, and the complaint was referred to the deputy public prosecutor there, Dr. Vincenzo Anania. Judge Anania, a man reportedly under attack by local fascist supporters, said that as the film was screened in territory under his jurisdiction he had first priority in any legal proceedings against it.

During the pause, the press campaign continued unabated, and the weekly journals began to conduct in-depth interviews. The weekly magazine, *Gente*, interviewed Professor Borraro and his wife and he listed the reasons which led to the banning. Apart from the incidents mentioned earlier, what particularly concerned Professor Borraro was the effect of such films as 1900 on today's youth, which he said was "fragile, possessing a delicate psycho-emotional equilibrium". He said that he had been supported in his stand by many friends and notables, including the Catholic archbishops of Amalfi and Salerno.

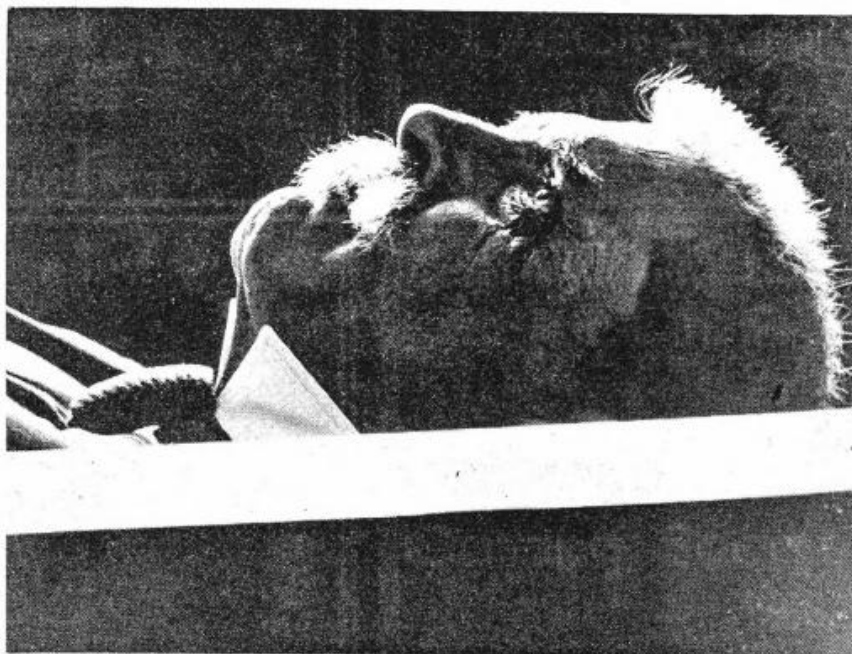
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Socialist schoolteacher, Anita (Stephania Sandrelli), sows the seeds of revolution among the peasants on Berlinghieri's farm.



Berlinghieri's son Alfredo, played by Robert De Niro.



Berlinghieri's death symbolizes an end to Italy of the *Risorgimento* and the birth of the modern era.





# THE PERSISTENCE OF VISION

## FILM MOVEMENT, THE PERSISTENCE OF VISION, AND THE PHI PHENOMENON.

**Bruce Horsfield**

There is still widespread error in the majority of film texts concerning the nature of the perceptual processes which give rise to our experiencing the illusion of movement when we watch the series of still photographs that we call a motion picture. Most film writers in the present decade appear to have inherited the popular, but incomplete, explanation of illusory film movement, which is given in terms of the perceptual phenomenon known as persistence of vision:

"Persistence of vision is simply the inability of the retina to follow and signal rapid fluctuations in brightness."

That is to say, we go on seeing something after we have ceased to see it, so to speak:

"The visual effects that arise when the eye is illuminated do not terminate immediately on cessation of stimulus but persist for a definite time interval. It is this persistence of vision that causes a moving light source to be seen as a line of light or a flashing light source to be seen as steady when the flash rate is sufficiently high. The persistent image is of high fidelity and short duration."

This perceptual phenomenon has been studied for a long time: The ancient Greeks were aware of it. With the rise of science, and the development of optical devices and toys, it seems that persistence of vision could explain the illusions created by a range of inventions:

"... cinema owes its very existence to a sophisticated technology. Its birth depended on several inventions that were part of the increased scientific activity of the late nineteenth century: the discovery of persistence of vision, which was the basis of many toys that created the illusion of motion (Nollet's "whirling top" in 1765, Plateau's and Stampfer's magic disc in 1832, which used a shutter, and Horner's Zoetrope, or wheel of life, in 1834) ... The principle of the shutter and persistence of vision were first combined with the projection of photographs in 1870 when Henry Renno Heyer projected his 18 posed pictures of a waltzing couple before an audience of 1500 people in the Academy of Music in Philadelphia."

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While the various optical toys varied in their design and operation, the one explanation of how their illusory effects were created was persistence of vision:

"All these (optical toys, such as the Zoetrope, Mutoscope, Phenakistoscope etc.) are dependent on a characteristic of the eye known as persistence of vision. If, while one is looking at an object, it suddenly disappears, the image of it will remain on the retina of the eye for a brief space of time (approximately one-tenth of a second) and during that time one will continue to 'see' the object although it is no longer before the eye. This can be demonstrated by means of another simple and easily-made optical toy of the nineteenth century, the Thaumatrope ... What happens here is that the eye sees repeated views of each picture in such rapid succession that the persistence of vision bridges the gap between them, and they appear as a continuous picture. Since two such continuous pictures are presented simultaneously in the same position, they merge into one."

Indeed, for the Thaumatrope the persistence theory still proves adequate. The Thaumatrope is the spinning disc, which, when spun, blends the two images on its surfaces:

"If a horse is on one side and a rider on the other, if a cage is on one side and a bird on the other, we see the rider on the horse and the bird in the cage. It cannot be otherwise. It is simply the result of the positive afterimages. If at dark we twirl a glowing joss stick in a circle, we do not see one point moving from place to place, but we see a continuous circular line. It is nowhere broken because, if the movement is quick, the positive afterimage of the light in its first position is still effective in our eye when the glowing point has passed through the whole circle and has reached the first position again."

The important point about the Thaumatrope is that the combined images do not move about, but present a static scene to the eye by superimposition of the two pictures. But a great many film writers use the persistence of vision theory to explain movement effects as well, not only in motion pictures but also in television:

"But we are willing to believe in the reality of light-and-shadow patterns created by pieces of film passing across a beam of light at the rate of 24 frames a second. A physiological effect is involved: each picture lingers as an afterimage; it is not instantly extinguished in the viewer's eye; his eye fails to see the empty intervals

(lasting 1/48th of a second) between the separate still images. Neither can he see the swift motion of the tiny electronic beam that scans the TV tube to create an image with little points of light. The optical persistence of the still images (or the running together of the points of light) combined with our delayed perception of the tiny changes from image to image causes us to believe we are witnessing real movement ... A chain of physiological and psychological events, therefore, identifies the viewing of motion pictures with the viewing of reality."

So the persistence logos appears to have been around at least for 150 years, and possibly because published findings of psychological experiments and discoveries would not be read by many film writers, the inadequate account is still widespread in the present decades. Persistence of vision theory is used to explain the illusion of film movement in many works, including the 1971 UNESCO publication, *The Role of Film in Development*, Lee Bobker's 1974 text, *Elements of Film*, the 1973 book *The Cinema as Art*, by Ralph Stephenson and J. R. Debrix, and Marsha Kinder's and Beverle Houston's *Close-up: A Critical Perspective on Film*, 1972. These are just a few of the many. Curiously, Kinder and Houston, having described illusory film movement in terms of persistence of vision, refer their readers to Rudolph Arnheim's "fuller discussion of the illusory aspects of cinema". Yet Arnheim is one of the few writers who refute the persistence of vision theory.

The refutation of the persistence of vision theory makes a most interesting study. Objections to the theory, on both theoretic and experimental grounds, go back to the late 1800s, so that Hugo Münsterberg's a priori criticism, implied in the irony of this 1916 account, was not wholly new:

"The routine explanation of the appearance of movement was accordingly: that every picture of a particular position left in the eye an afterimage until the next picture with the slightly changed position of the jumping animal or of the marching men was in sight, and the afterimage of this lasted until the third came. The afterimages were responsible for the fact that no interruptions were noticeable, while the movement itself resulted simply from the passing of one position into another. What else is the perception of movement but the seeing of a long series of different positions?"



The irony is in the last sentence, because Münsterberg knew very well that if the account is taken literally, that is, if motion is made up of many different "stills" then the perceived effect should, therefore, be jerky, like dancers under a stroboscopic light. Since we do not perceive stroboscopic motion, but natural motion, in films, then there must be something wrong with the explanation. The more satisfactory account must be given in terms of another perceptual phenomenon of vision, known as the "phi phenomenon". Münsterberg, a German lecturer in psychology, came to Harvard on the invitation of William James in 1892, and became one of America's foremost psychologists. Of particular concern to him was the need to popularize psychology as a science, and he wrote and spoke much on that topic.

In the Foreword to his book on Münsterberg's *The Silent Photoplay in 1916*, Richard Griffith writes:

"Early in 1915 (Münsterberg) chanced to see Annette Kellerman in *Neptune's Daughter*, and he spent much of the following summer in nickelodeons, studying this new thing which so astonishingly illustrated the result of his own researches . . . 'Intellectually the world has been divided into two classes — the "highbrows" and the "lowbrows";' he wrote, 'The Pictograph will bring these two brows together.'"<sup>10</sup>

There might be many today who would agree with Münsterberg's prophecy about the Pictograph, or motion picture film, as we call it.

Münsterberg's "researches" were indebted to earlier researchers, as Münsterberg himself tells us in his description of the phi phenomenon:

"Both (Wertheimer and Korte) worked with a delicate instrument in which two light lines on a dark ground could be exposed in very quick succession and in which it was possible to vary the position of the lines, the distance of the lines, the intensity of their light, the time exposure of each, and the time between the appearance of the first and of the second . . . If a vertical line is immediately followed by a horizontal, the two together give the impression of one right angle. If the time between the vertical and the horizontal is long, first one then the other is seen. But at a certain length of time interval a new effect is reached. We see the vertical line falling over and lying flat like the horizontal line. If the eyes are fixed on the point in the midst of the angle we might expect that this movement phenomenon would stop, but . . . the experiment shows that under these circumstances we frequently get the strongest impression of motion. If we use two horizontal lines, the one above the other, we see, if the right time interval is chosen, that the upper one moves downward toward the lower. But we can introduce there a very interesting variation. If we make the lower line, which appears objectively after the upper one, more intense, the total impression is one which begins with the lower. We see first the lower line moving towards the upper one which also approaches the lower; and then follows the second phase in which both appear to fall down to the position of the lower one. It is not necessary to go further into details in order to demonstrate that the apparent movement is in no way the mere result of an afterimage and that the impression of motion is surely more than the mere perception of successive phases of movement. The movement is in these cases not really seen from without but is superadded, by the action of the mind, to motionless pictures."<sup>11</sup>

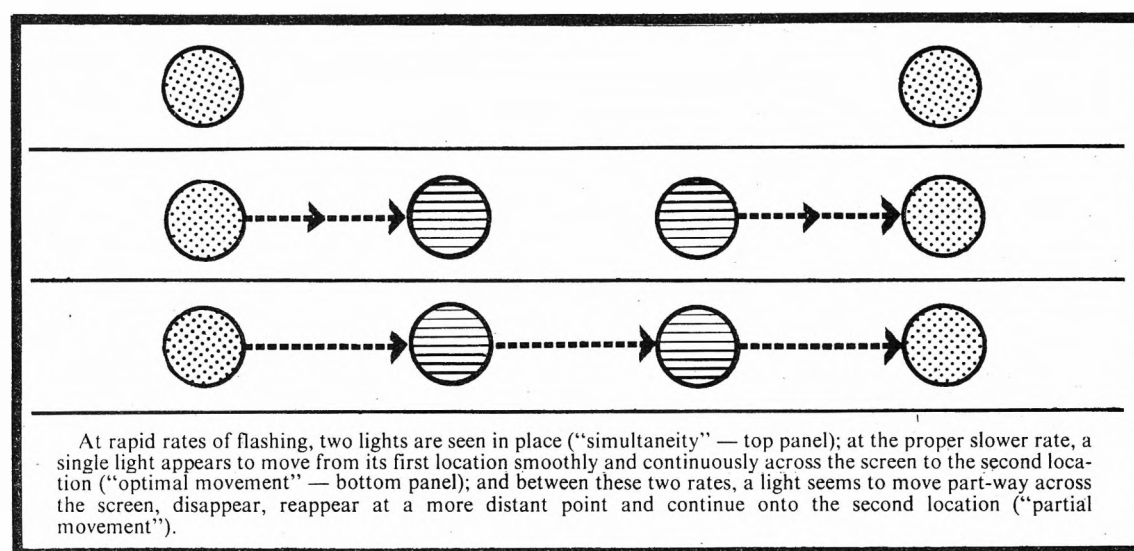
Film movement is apparent movement, as opposed to veridical movement, which is actual displacement of objects in space and time. The cinematic illusion is caused by the senses being fooled, and more than persistence of vision is required for the deception to succeed. Two perceptual characteristics are involved, persistence of vision and the phi phenomenon of apparent movement. What is the role of each?

First of all we must begin with the necessary arithmetic. For a projector screening at 24 frames per second (sound speed for most projectors) then each frame of the film is exposed on the screen for 1/48th second. So for every second of the film, only 24 x 1/48th, or half sec, is comprised of image time. The other half second is made up of total blackness, caused by the masking action of the rotating shutter in the projector, so designed to blank off projection while each successive still picture is jerked into place. Without the shutter the screened image is a

hopeless blur, seen sometimes when the projector mechanism is not working properly. There are 24 maskings of the projector gate 1/48th second each in duration, making up the other half second. Of course none of us see these blackouts because the image of each preceding still picture on the film lingers as a strong positive afterimage, otherwise called persistence of vision. This is as far as the traditional explanation goes, and its main flaw is that it does not say why the series of clearly perceived stills is not seen as jerky motion.

So that the illusion of smooth, fluid movement can be better explained, we must include the phi phenomenon of apparent movement. The experiments and demonstrations of Exner, Wertheimer, Korte and a host of others have been employed to clarify the illusory effects resulting from the projection of film. Phi movement is the appearance of movement where none actually exists, and may be witnessed in a great variety of situations. The navigation lights of an aeroplane, flashing alternately, can give the illusion of motion whereby one light appears to move to the other one. Advertising lighting, flashed at the appropriate rate, gives the distinct impression of movement. Phi movement "is generally studied in the laboratory by using a very simple display — merely two lights which can be automatically switched so that just after one light has gone off the other comes on. What is seen — provided the distance between the lights and the time intervals between the lights, and the time intervals between their flashes is about right — is a single light moving across from the position of the first light to the second."<sup>12</sup>

The intermittent images must be presented with space and time jumps that are not too large, since what is seen will vary markedly with variations to the rate of flashing and the gap between the flashes, as in the following diagram:<sup>13</sup>



The relevance of the phi phenomenon (called beta motion by some writers) to the explanation of apparent movement in film is established by Wertheimer's experiment where lines set at right angles were used. This work is the paradigm of all the visual content of all the separate frames of all films, since the two lines are an abstraction of the two dimensional content of each frame, including color, size, shape and position.

Having seen the prevalence of the persistence of vision theory, we may conjecture concerning the number of people who are aware of the more complete view, which includes both persistence of vision and the phi experience. There have been some who have not missed the fuller account:

"Film students who attended Slavko Vorkapich's lectures at the Museum of Modern Art in 1965, and were astounded at his demonstration that the illusion of film movement does not derive from the persistence of vision

but from the 'phi phenomenon', would have been less astounded had they been familiar with Münsterberg's description" . . .<sup>12</sup>

Like Münsterberg, Rudolf Arnheim, in 1971, acknowledged the implications of Wertheimer's experiments, stating simply that "since we see motion, motion must be produced somewhere in the brain".<sup>13</sup> Another, Paul Kolers, who has recently written a most comprehensive survey<sup>14</sup> of the whole question of illusory and veridical motion, devotes a large chapter to Wertheimer. Kolers mentions the legend that Wertheimer's interest in apparent movement arose from his contemplation of the physiological and psychological aspects of the motion picture. More importantly, Kolers asserts that no satisfactory account of the phi phenomenon has yet been put forth. This means that we cannot as yet fully explain how the film illusion is created. Even persistence of vision and phi movement are unable to supply a full account.

Before proceeding further, some notice should be taken of the work of S. Exner, to whom Wertheimer and a host of other researchers are indebted for discovering, in 1875-6, apparent movement. Exner ascertained that the time order of two spatially separated successive electric sparks can be correctly perceived (on the average) when the interval between them is not less than 0.045 secs. Then, putting the sparks closer to each other in space, he achieved stroboscopic motion, instead of succession. The threshold time at which the direction of the moving spark was perceived was only 0.014 secs. Movement, Exner concluded, must involve a special process of the mind,<sup>15</sup> and perception of motion cannot be attributed to memory of position and perception of order. Interest in apparent movement then mostly lapsed until Wertheimer's work in 1910, which was published in 1912. His findings created excited interest, and have been described since as the

beginnings of the Gestalt movement in psychology.

Of central importance to these early experimenters was the Critical Fusion Frequency (CFF), which is the rate of flashing below which mere spatial and temporal separation is observed, and above which optimal motion i.e., the phi phenomenon, is experienced. Many studies since have shown that the CFF varies from person to person, with experimental conditions, with practice at observing the phenomenon, with volition and attitudes, with spatial separation of the flashes, and luminosity of the stimuli. For light of a given level of brilliance 30 flashes per second will result in a steady light; for a brighter light the CFF will be as high as 50 flashes per second, which may result in flicker effect. Flicker can be an irritant, as in a faulty fluorescent light when the ends



pulsate rapidly. The peripheral retina is very sensitive to such irritation. The rate of projection of film, 18 or 24 frames per second, is well below the CFF, and normally we would experience a flickering effect. The early cinema suffered from a flickering image — hence the name “the flicks”. But in modern projectors the problem of flicker is overcome by raising the CFF to above the threshold. A special shutter is used which shows each picture three times in rapid succession, thereby raising the 24 frames per second to 72 f.p.s. The peripheral retina may or may not detect flicker at this high rate.

Flicker can cause some interesting problems:

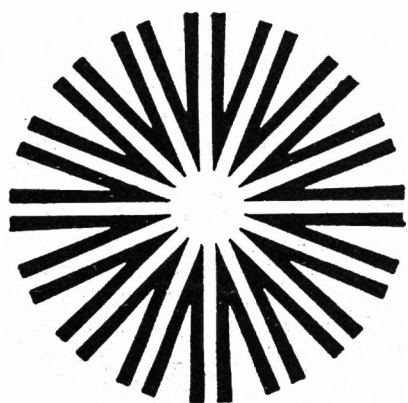
“Television gets over the problem of flicker rather differently. The picture is not presented as a whole, as in the cinema, but is built up in strips (known as an “interlaced raster”) which minimizes flicker, though it is present and can be annoying, and even dangerous, for people with epilepsy, who can be seriously affected by flicker.

“It also presents a hazard in some unexpected circumstances, such as when driving by a row of trees whose shadows are cast upon the road by a low sun, or when landing a helicopter. The rotor blades of a helicopter produce a flickering light which can be most disturbing and dangerous.

“Low-frequency flicker produces very odd effects on normal observers as well as on those with a tendency to epilepsy. At flash rates of about 5 to 10 per second brilliant colors, and moving and stationary shapes may be seen and can be extremely vivid. Their origin is obscure, and they probably arise from direct disturbance of the visual systems of the brain . . . Stimulation by bright flashing lights can be an unpleasant experience often leading to headache and nausea.”<sup>15</sup>

(At least one acquaintance of mine cannot drive his car without severe and audible discomfort when the sun is below the trees. He cannot tolerate the flickering effect.)

Creating phi movement is not the only way of producing illusion of movement. The following graphic, called a “sunburst” (it is the one-time logo of the Ilford firm) can produce an illusion of apparent movement. To try this out concentrate on the white centre of the graphic for about 20 seconds, then look immediately at a plain white surface. Movement should be seen. (Description of the illusion here might assist in its creation, which is cheating a little):



There are many other variations of the illusions of movement, demonstrated by Wertheimer and others. For example, to refute the theory, prevalent at the turn of the century, that the illusion of motion is associated with movements of the eye i.e. in following an object, Wertheimer presented “in one flash two lines which were a small distance apart and in a second flash two others flanking the first two but a larger distance apart. The perceived motion then went in opposite directions simultaneously,”<sup>17</sup> which of course the eyes cannot do.

Also, “he presented one flash to one eye and another flash to the other eye and achieved good perceptions of motion; he alleged therefore that motion perception was ‘behind the eye’ and not ‘in the eye’.”<sup>18</sup> In other experiments Wertheimer found that observers of the flashes of two different colored lights reported that the flashes

change color in flight. He also found that after a sufficient number of trial flashes, “motion was seen for a few additional trials even when only one flash was presented: the visual system persevered in its response to a single flash in spite of the absence of its partner.”<sup>19</sup> Many varied experiments have since resulted in many classifications of apparent movement, so much so that one writer complained that the whole Greek alphabet was being used up. Phi motion was objectless motion (for simplicity I have used phi in a broad, inclusive sense); beta motion was apparent movement wherein an illusory object was seen to move (this would be relevant to film movement, of course); delta motion is phi motion of the second flash towards the first flash, which occurs when the second flash is more intense than the first; gamma motion is “the apparent expansion at onset and contraction at offset of a single flash of light.”<sup>20</sup>

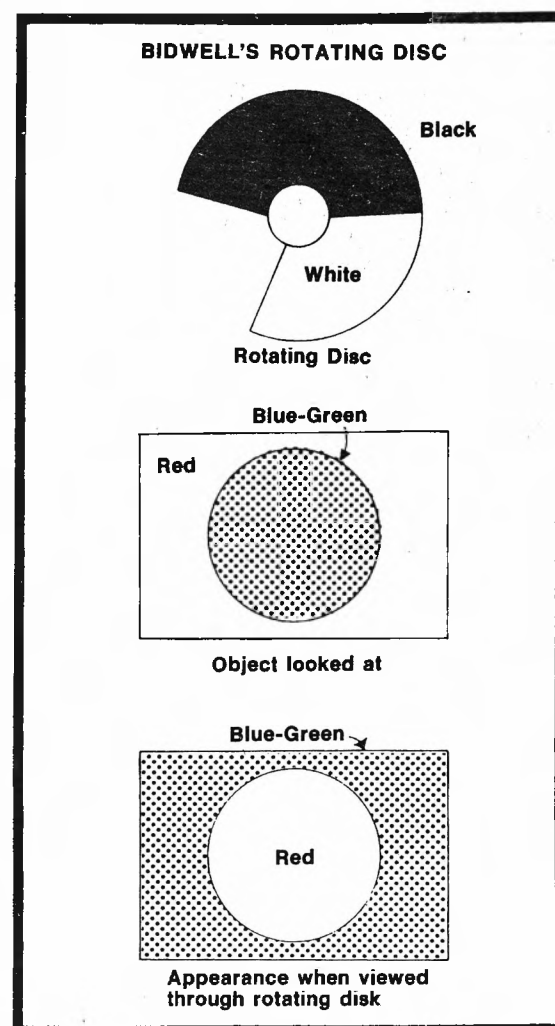
Objects of differing shapes have been observed to alter their shapes in flight; others to disappear and reappear. Kolers summarizes the illusions:

“Two properly placed and properly tuned flashes induce the illusion of a single object moving from its first location across the intervening empty space to its second location, where it may either disappear or return to its first location. If the interstimulus and intercycle intervals are equal and of proper duration, the illusory object is seen oscillating in smooth motion; if the intercycle interval is several times the duration of the interstimulus interval, the object disappears at the second location and movement recommences at the first.

“In other words, when conditions are right the visual system creates a perceptual object in the intervening space where physically there is none. The perceptual object created, moreover, resolves differences in appearance between the two physical objects, such as differences in color or shape. Hence the perceptual construction is not a mere redundant filling in of the space between the flashes with copies of the flashes themselves; it is an active resolution of their difference.”<sup>21</sup>

Although a satisfactory explanation of these phenomena is not available, there are some aspects of illusory film movement that can nevertheless be explored. For example, we know that the positive afterimage that we call persistence of vision keeps each frame of the film clearly in view until the next frame takes its place, and that there is no perceptual decay in any of the images. But, we may ask, why does not the eye combine each sustained image with the image of the next frame of the film, resulting in blurring, double images and so forth? Why does not persistence of vision result in blurring in general, not only of film images, but of all that we see around us in our daily lives? The answer is that not all images that are formed on the retina are accepted as perceptions by the brain. Duke-Elder states that “the afterimage mechanism is a peripheral one depending on retino-neural processes and not on higher cerebral activities. That this is so can be shown by many experiments that demonstrate that an afterimage may be formed by a stimulus that never reaches consciousness.”<sup>22</sup> So that the afterimage of, say, frame 1 is still present during the perception of frame 2, but only in the form of retinal activity. This may be illustrated by Bidwell’s experiment:<sup>23</sup>

A disc half white and half black and with a sector omitted is rotated in front of a background partly red and partly blue-green, so that images are presented to the eye in the order: colored background, white sector, black sector. At a certain speed of rotation it is found that the complimentary colors of the background alone are seen, that is, the red appears pale blue-green and the blue-green appears pink. The mechanism is as follows: — the red stimulus causes the succeeding white to be tinted with the complimentary blue-green: a second red stimulus arriving at the period of the afterimage is suppressed; but a succeeding white field is tinted blue-green by it. This demonstrates that although no red impulse has reached con-



sciousness, it has left its impression on the retina.

It is also worthwhile to study the possible roles of the 1/48th sec. blackout between frames. The evidence suggests that the blackout has further valuable functions: it enhances the quality of the persisting image, preventing its decay, and it makes the retina more sensitive to the subsequent stimulation of the next frame in the film.

The evidence that both functions occur is derived from the phenomenon known as *successive contrast*. If we regard the series, image/blackout/image/blackout, as a succession of sudden differences in what the retina receives, then that succession is actually a more suitable presentation to the retina than, say, image/image/image or image/color/image/color, i.e. such as white, diffuse light:

“We have seen that after a stimulus of moderate intensity the presence of a positive afterimage indicates the persistence of activity of the visual apparatus. While this activity lasts, the retina is incapable of reacting normally to a second stimulus of a similar nature, but shows an increased sensitivity to processes of an opposite kind, which results in the production of a negative afterimage complimentary to the first stimulus. Stimulation has therefore an inhibitory effect on succeeding reactions of a similar kind, while excitability is increased to activity of other types.”<sup>24</sup>

That is, by delaying “the second stimulus of a similar nature”, i.e. the next frame, the positive afterimage of the first frame is enhanced. It is important that the screen is blacked out between frames (as opposed to diffuse light filling in the 1/48th sec. gap, for example) as a like stimulus, such as white light, gives rise to a negative afterimage of complementary colors to those of the primary image. A film on a screen could fairly be described as “a stimulus of moderate intensity.”

The phenomenon of successive contrast is a most important characteristic of the ages:

*Continued on P. 285*







# ROMAN POLANSKI ON ACTING



In the following interview Roman Polanski talks about his latest film "The Tenant" with *Cinema Papers* Los Angeles correspondent David Brandes. Polanski also discusses his approach to the dual task of acting and directing, and gives his impressions of the actors he has worked with, including Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway and Isabelle Adjani. Polanski plays the lead role in "The Tenant", which also features Isabelle Adjani, Shelley Winters and Melvyn Douglas.

There seems to be a theme that runs through all your work: and that is a kind of madness, a kind of paranoia. Characters find themselves in a great deal of trouble. We usually catch them on the edge, and by the time the film is over, they're over the edge. How do you explain that?

I've often wondered myself. I think this is a question for one of those film critics or film scholars or psychiatrists who really observe and analyze filmmakers throughout their creative life. I am always at a loss when someone asks me to analyze my own work. I don't know. I have obsessions, interests, beliefs . . . and whatever I do must be a function of these whether I like it or not. It's like when you doodle — doodles bear some kind of relation to your state of mind.

Have you always been concerned with madness?

Yes I have. It preoccupies me. Not that I am so obsessed with it that I'm afraid. I don't think that my mental health represents any hazard — I think it's all right. But I have been acquainted early in my life with all kinds of madness — all kinds of strange coincidences. I once knew someone who was taken to a home, to an institution, and I have always been fascinated by it. Our mental health seems to be something which preoccupies today's society so much that the subject itself seems to be something very vile.

The outlook of the characters in

"The Tenant" is very European. Is this something you strove for?

Well the book itself, the novel which I have adapted, is so deeply rooted in Paris. It is so French, so typically French that I would not undertake an adaptation, changing the nationality of the piece itself. I like going places and making films in different countries and whenever I go to a new country I try to observe what is most typical, tangible about the place I intend to film in and I try to render it in my work. I have done films in New York, like *Rosemary's Baby*. It doesn't, I hope, have any particular flaws as far as the nationality of the film is concerned. It is very American, New York-ese. I made *Chinatown* in Los Angeles, and it was Los Angeles.

*The Tenant* is a French story. But it was purchased by an American studio, by Paramount, and obviously there were suggestions of adapting it for New York because it made for a more commercially viable project — but I would not undertake that.

One of the strengths of your films is the strong sense of location. "Chinatown" for example really captured the mood of Los Angeles. How do you achieve this?

You start with a feeling, with a certain instinct, yet you have to base yourself on research. You go through things, you see old magazines, films, photos. You go to the libraries and try to create some idea of the town at the time. I don't think it is difficult. It's a ques-

tion of intuition and will. If you are really interested in the place and want to render it in your work, then it's feasible and it doesn't matter if it is Los Angeles or Transylvania. If you make a film about vampires, it still has to happen somewhere. The worst films or books or plays are those which happen nowhere. Even an imaginary place has to have some kind of research in it, some justification and motivation.

To give the actors roots in the place they come from . . .

To give them space, rather. To place them in a concrete place, even if it is an imaginary place . . . even if it is the planet Mars! You have to ask yourself what would be the way of behaving? What is the weight of a human being on a planet of a different size? How does he breathe with an apparatus? These things give you more ideas about the

behavior of the characters. They make them richer because they relate to something. They don't walk in an idle, futile space, they walk in a concrete space.

In "The Tenant" the central character's environment — the apartment — is very clearly drawn, yet he appears extremely uncomfortable, uneasy . . .

Well, now we are talking about two things. The man who is uncomfortable is an imaginary character, he is the hero of the film. But the space itself is concrete, made by the filmmaker. We must not mix up the fantasy with reality. Film is a fantasy . . . every film is a fantasy because it is conceived by the makers and the characters don't really live.

You have a reputation for being extremely meticulous. Everything



Roman Polanski as Trelkovsky, the central character in *The Tenant*.





Isabelle Adjani: sensitive but difficult to work with.



Jack Nicholson: a consummate actor.



Roman Polanski: "When you make yourself an actor, you have one less person to argue with".

**has to be done in a certain way, and done ahead of time. How much do you rely on improvisation and things happening on the spot?**

Well, I always conceive everything beforehand. But I don't stop there. I continue and I hope that improvisation will bring new elements and give it freshness.

I like to have the maximum number of elements considered beforehand because I like conceiving it and I like working on the script. For me this is the fun of filmmaking. I come from a film school and I've been trained that way. But I also believe that by making it all happen before you find yourself on the set you save yourself a lot of trouble. You know what you have to deal with, and you are well prepared. You also have time for more work, for improvisation, for new inventions, and you're not concerned with things that you shouldn't be bothered with while you're on the set.

**When you act in one of your films — as you do in "The Tenant" — do you encounter any problems directing yourself?**

Well, it is easy to direct while acting, but it is quite difficult to act while directing. You see, when you make yourself an actor, first of all you have one less person to argue with . . . you are dealing with someone you understand better than the others. That's the advantage of it. The technical problem of staging the scene can be very easily overcome. I start with rehearsal, I don't even look at the camera which rests somewhere in the corner of the studio. I go through the scene with the other actors, or alone, whatever it requires. When that is settled I have an understudy or a stand-in who has been observing the rehearsal to go through all the motions. Then I line up my shot

with the camera. I see exactly how it works by looking through my viewfinder.

Now comes the more difficult part — the performance, the acting itself. It requires a tremendous amount of concentration and relaxation at the same time. You have to be relaxed . . . your face, your muscles have to be completely loose. You have to concentrate on the character, forget everything else and think of the function that you have to perform within the shot or scene. If you suddenly start thinking about lights, camera movements, other players' performances or the numerous details that the director usually has to tackle, then suddenly your performance suffers. It just falls to pieces. You have to train yourself to forget — you leave your director's hat on the director's chair and you put on the actor's hat.

**What about monitoring your own performance?**

That is not so difficult because actors know when they play well and they know when they're lousy. When someone plays well he feels it, there is a sense of satisfaction, of contentment when it all goes right, so if it is not right you know and you want to do another take. Lousy actors are often grouchy, but the people who have no struggle with their performance are very easy to deal with.

**Let's talk for a moment about some of the top actors you've worked with. Jack Nicholson, for example.**

Jack Nicholson is about the finest actor I have ever worked with. He is pleasant to be with on the set because acting is easy for him. Sometimes when it does get difficult you can feel it: he becomes less pleasant to the others. Jack

also works very hard. He likes to go out, stay late, dance, listen to music, talk to friends — but that doesn't stop him going thoroughly through his lines before going to bed. And when he appears on the set you can be sure he knows every line of his dialogue . . . and those of Faye Dunaway as well, to help her, because she doesn't.

**How did you find working with Dunaway?**

It was very hard. Very hard. She was struggling with the performance. She is difficult to work with . . . maybe the most difficult person I have ever worked with. To tell you the truth, a great pain in the arse.

**But she gave a great performance . . .**

She did, but it was blood, sweat and tears. But I don't regret it. I don't regret having worked with her.

**What style of acting were you trained in? Stanislavsky's method or a more traditional style?**

I must tell you that first of all I come from Poland, as you know, so such things as Stanislavsky were obligatory. We were brought up on Stanislavsky. And we were sick with Stanislavsky, and we were bored with Stanislavsky. Nevertheless I must admit that there are a lot of interesting observations in his work, and some of them can help a beginner tremendously.

But I think that once you are acting you don't think of any kind of method or style. I think you just do it, and I do believe in talent. Some people have it and others don't. I was not aware of it as much when I was beginning, but now when I think back, I realise I had talent for acting.

When I audition people, when I

make tests, there are some people who immediately understand what I want — and they may never have had any acting experience. With others there is nothing, and no amount of work will make any difference.

**Do you think the intense preparation of Method actors is a help to a director like you or a hindrance?**

I don't think it is a hindrance. I think it is a help because it teaches people to find something — particularly the people who don't have it — that the others already have instinctively: the ability to switch into somebody else, another character; the ability to become someone else and do certain things, following a different pattern of behavior other than the one the person is born with.

However, this preparation can be replaced by something else. Stanislavsky says, to summarize it, that if you want to make the gesture of banging a table with your fist in anger, you have to concentrate, you have to build up this anger within you. And then comes the moment when it will spontaneously make you clench your fist and bang the table. But Vakhantangov, another Russian, observed later, if you clench your fist and bang the table it develops in you similar emotions without any build-up.

So it works both ways — a sort of psychosomatic reaction. Just try to clench your fist and hit this desk very strongly and you will see that something happens to you, to your emotions. This physical action causes it, and is just one of the ways to create emotional build-up.

I don't really like this technique, and I don't like seeing an actor dancing around trying new steps on the stage. What I mean is that you need to concentrate, and you need to prepare yourself. If you watch good actors behave between takes,





you see they don't horse around. You look at Jack Nicholson for example: as much as he likes horsing around, as much as he likes a good joke, between takes he sits quietly in his chair on the side. He is not exuberant, he is quiet, he is subdued — he concentrates and prepares himself for the shot. When you call him he gets up, walks slowly to his place, goes through the scene and you film it. You observe others: they talk to their secretaries, to their girl friend, to the electrician. And you can't tear them away to put them in front of the camera.

**Quite clearly then, as a director you have to create an environment in which the actors can feel natural and allow their talents to come out . . .**

It mainly depends on the character of the person with whom I work. I don't have any particular method because every individual is entirely different. There are probably as many personalities as men on earth.

**What was it like working with Isabelle Adjani on "The Tenant"?**

It is quite difficult to work with her. She is a tremendously sensitive young person. She is extremely talented: I have hardly met anyone as talented as she is. But she lacks cinematographic experience. She worked in the theatre for two or three years and became a big star in the classical theatre in France. She is very conscientious and she works very hard, but she does not realize yet that you need certain strategies for film — that it is all-day work and every-day work.

But she is one of those people who really concentrates. For example, one day I saw her standing in a corner shaking, and I asked her what the matter was. She said she'd been preparing for the scene. I told

her that we hadn't even started lighting let alone rehearsing. And by the time we did start she was completely exhausted: there were no tears and no emotion left.

Isabelle also likes intense personal relationships in her work, and I have difficulty in really developing this type of atmosphere on the set. I don't like it, I like to keep it very remote. I don't like being close to actors, or to be very friendly with them. I don't even like seeing them after work. Jack Nicholson is a very close friend of mine, but when we were working together we never dined or lunched together. It makes it more difficult for me to work on the set.

**Turning specifically to "The Tenant" — did it turn out as you planned?**

It came more or less as I wanted. But don't forget that *The Tenant* is an adaptation of a novel. And if you decide to adapt a novel you take certain steps, and then you are stuck with it. You just have to accept it. I liked the novel, although there are some flaws in it — it changes too drastically in the middle. It's like two parts.

I tried to unify it a little bit more, but unless you decide to write a new script it's virtually impossible, and I don't like doing it. If I pick up a novel and make it into a film it's because I like it, and I always try to be as faithful as I can. That's the way I was with *Rosemary's Baby* and that's the way I was with *The Tenant*. These are the only two books I have made into films.

With *The Tenant* I liked the character I depict in the film very much. Actually I was more interested in playing the part than making the film. When it was first given to me some 10 years ago I didn't want to direct it because I had just finished making *Repulsion*, which had a very similar atmosphere. But I said I would love to play the part. And when Paramount acquired the rights to the book, Bob Evans thought that was a great idea.

Eventually, a project on which I was working for a long time was postponed for some 10 months and Bob Evans asked me if I would both act in *The Tenant* and direct it. As it seemed like a relatively easy film to do, I said yes.

**I did want to ask you one specific question about "The Tenant". At the end of the film the character you portray attempts suicide in exactly the same way as the previous tenant. He isn't successful, so he goes back for a second try and fails again — and gets a tremendous horselaugh from the audience. Was this black comedy intentional?**

Yes. It should get a laugh. Someone who misses the first time and tries to do it another time deserves a laugh — even applause I would say.

**You don't think you go too far? The change in character at this point is very abrupt. One moment the audience is sharing your paranoia and terror, and the next they are plunged into slapstick — almost comic melodrama.**

Well, that shift has its source in the novel itself. There is a shift in the novel, and, as I said, you have to change it completely or pick up something else. Since I'd decided to do this particular novel I had to cope with it. The change of style is conscious, it's not something that has escaped me. You either like it or not, and I do.

**I found it stylistically inconsistent. You don't see that as a problem at all . . .**

Yes I see it as a problem. But I accepted it at the beginning and just had to be content with it — otherwise I would have had to start anew. Either do the film in the style of the first half, or do it in the style of the second.

**So you will consciously select a project knowing that it had a major flaw . . .**

Yes that's right. It is a kind of major flaw. Perhaps the idea should be to make an intermission and let people have ice-cream in the middle. Then they'll have forgotten what it was like in the beginning.

**So when you take a project and you realize that there are certain flaws in it, rather than break the unity of the piece, you just go with it . . .**

Well no, usually I try to organize the construction of the film. But with *The Tenant* there was no visible way. Maybe someone more talented would be able to deal with it. The only way would be to avoid him having any kind of visions or hallucinations in the second part, because those are sources of anguish, and they are the things that change the style of the film. Perhaps another way would be to make it completely realistic so that you don't really know whether it is happening or not — whether it is in the imagination or not.

But then I'm afraid the film would be tremendously dull. I don't think that you can sustain two hours of picture just observing a guy walking around his apartment.

You would certainly attract a group of what I call stamp collectors who laugh at the film and who would be acclaiming the sober approach of the director. But you wouldn't see any other people in the cinema. To make it entertaining you have to create some kind of suspense in the film, and since it is about a man's solitude and about his paranoia and hallucinations, you have to show the things he sees or believes are around him. ★

## ROMAN POLANSKI FILMOGRAPHY

### Shorts

- 1955-57 *The Bike* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski) Unfinished
- 1957-58 *The Crime* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski)
- 1958 *Break Up the Dance* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski)
- Two Men and a Wardrobe* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski)
- 1959 *When Angels Fall* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski)
- 1961 *The Fat and the Lean* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski/Jean Pierre Rousseau)
- 1962 *Mammals* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski/A. Kondratyuk)
- 1963 *A River of Diamonds* (episode for *The Best Swindles in the World*) (Screenplay Roman Polanski/Gérard Brach)

### Features

- 1962 *Knife in the Water* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski/Jerzy Skolimowski/Jakub Goldberg)
- 1964 *Repulsion* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski/Gérard Brach)
- 1965 *Cul-de-Sac* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski/Gérard Brach)
- 1967 *The Fearless Vampire Killers or Pardon Me But Your Teeth Are In My Neck* (Dance of The Vampires) (Screenplay: Roman Polanski/Gérard Brach)
- 1968 *Rosemary's Baby* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski after the novel by Ira Levin)
- 1972 *Macbeth* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski after the play by William Shakespeare)
- 1973 *What?* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski/Gérard Brach)
- 1974 *Chinatown* (Screenplay: Robert Towne)
- 1976 *The Tenant* (Screenplay: Roman Polanski/Gérard Brach after the novel *Le Locataire Chimérique* by Roland Topor)

### Other Screenplays

- 1964 *Do You Like Women* dir. Jean Léon (in collaboration with Gérard Brach)
- 1968 *La Fille D'en Face* dir. Jean Daniel Simon (in collaboration with Gérard Brach)
- 1969 *A Day At The Beach* dir. Simon Hessa (produced by Roman Polanski)

### As Actor

- 1953 *Three Stories* dir. Konrad Nalecki, Ewa Poleska and Czeslaw Petelski
- 1954 *A Generation* dir. Andrzej Wajda
- 1955 *The Magic Bicycle* dir. Sikl Sternfeld
- 1956 *End of Night* dir. Julian Dziedzina, Pawel Komorowski and Walzntyna Uszycka
- 1957 *Sunken Ships* dir. Ewa and Czeslaw Petelski
- 1958 *Phone My Wife* dir. Jaroslav Mach
- Two Men and a Wardrobe*
- 1959 *When Angels Fall*
- Lotna* dir. Andrzej Wajda
- 1960 *Innocent Sorcerers* dir. Andrzej Wajda
- Beware of the Yeti* dir. Andrzej Czekański
- See You Tomorrow* dir. Januos Morgenstern
- Bad Luck* dir. Andrzej Munk
- 1961 *The Fat and the Lean*
- 1962 *Mammals*
- 1967 *The Fearless Vampire Killers or Pardon Me But Your Teeth Are In My Neck* (Dance of The Vampires)
- 1969 *The Magic Christian* dir. Joseph McGrath
- 1973 *What?*
- 1974 *Chinatown*
- Blood for Dracula* dir. Paul Morrissey
- 1976 *The Tenant*



# GUIDE FOR THE

## AUSTRALIAN FILM PRODUCER: PART 4

### FINANCING THE PRODUCTION — 1

In this fourth part of a 19-part series, *Cinema Papers* contributing editor Antony I. Ginnane and Melbourne solicitor Leon Gorr move on with our model producer to the most difficult stage of pre-production: the obtaining of finance for the proposed film. Literary rights to the property have been secured and a completed screenplay has been commissioned. An agent may be working with the producer in an attempt to package the production. But before the venture can proceed further, finance must be found.

The Australian film industry in its recent redevelopment has made use of two sources of financing which are largely alien to the experience of the U.S.-based producer. On the one hand there has been the heavy cash investment, firstly by federal and now by state legislatures, and on the other the frequent recourse by producers to the funds of 'angels' or private in-

dividuals with spare speculative monies.

This use of individuals or groups of individuals to bankroll a production is common on the Broadway live theatre scene, but until recently it has been most unusual in either New York or Los Angeles-linked film production. Other sources of financing — pre-sales, negative pick-up, distributor or exhibitor direct investment, limited partnerships and tax shelters — have been used to some extent, from time to time, in the U.S. and Australia.

In this part of the series we propose to deal with two forms of private financing: via 'angels' and via film distribution companies. In the next issue, we will consider various forms of state and federal government funding and other methods of film financing in use mentioned above.

#### 'ANGEL' FINANCING

The term 'angels' can encompass a wide variety of would-be investors, ranging from the family or wealthy friends of the producer to TV stations, institutional lenders etc. But what distinguishes an 'angel' investor from a distributor or exhibitor investor is that while the 'angel' is primarily interested in the end returns on his investment, the distributor investor will also want distribution rights to the completed film, for which he will receive a distribution fee. If he is vertically integrated, he may also want to make profits with the film in his cinema as an exhibitor investor (like General Cinemas of Boston, partners with Lew Grade's ITC in Associated General Films) and also want priority runs for the completed film in his own cinemas. Similarly, a TV station which invests in return for television rights to the completed film is not an 'angel'.

In Australia, 'angels' have included motor car dealers, clothing manufacturers and retailers, a merchant bank, TV stations, industrialists, land developers, solicitors, and accountants (and their clients), and doctors. The track record of

success for productions which have been largely 'angel'-financed has not been good to date, and few 'angels' have come back for a second try in another film.

The ideal 'angel', of course, is a speculative investor, well cashed up, who appreciates the high risks involved in film production, is aware of the potentially long waiting time from the day he signs his cheque to the day the film goes into release, and has some interest in or desire to associate himself (albeit to a small degree) with the so-called glamor of showbusiness.

Normally, 'angel' investment should be structured by way of unit trust. A company is incorporated to act as trustee for the unit trust and at the same time to provide production services for the filming. It becomes the contracting entity with talent, crew, laboratories etc. Each 'angel' enters into an agreement with the trustee company, a model of which is set out below in Precedent 7a.

The preamble to this agreement sets out details of the producers, the project and the investors, the amount of the budget, and those costs which the producer may deduct from funds received from either the investors or distributors and exhibitors of the finished film. The trustee company warrants that it has all the necessary licences and copyrights to the material to be used in the film. If the producer personally holds any of these licences or copyrights, he will need to assign them to the trustee company before executing the agreement with the investors.

Clause 3 of the agreement sets out the responsibility of the producer in the disbursement of funds received after release of the production. Some notes of this clause are appropriate. Firstly, though this agreement contemplates investors and the producer sharing equally in the net receipts from the first dollar received from the distributor, it is not uncommon for the investors first to be repaid their subscription to the fund and then for the producer and investors to share as per the agreed split.

Secondly, it may be necessary for one investor to receive priority of payment over other investors and the producer. (For example, he may

*Cinema Papers* is pleased to announce that in conjunction with the authors of *Guide for the Australian Film Producer*, Leon Gorr and Antony I. Ginnane, preparations are in hand for this series to be made available to readers in a more complete and detailed form on a private subscription basis. In this and earlier instalments of the series limitations of space have prevented the authors from presenting a full selection of precedents. For example to print precedent 7B, the Production Distribution Agreement referred to in the second section of this article would have taken some 10 extra pages of fine print. This precedent, as well as others excluded for reasons of space from the series plus a continuous update of material previously published will be available on an annual basis in loose leaf binder form. Subscription details will be available in the next issue of *Cinema Papers*.



have supplied end money.<sup>1)</sup> This, too, can be provided for in Australia.

Thirdly, this clause raises the vexed question of the equitable split between producer and investor, the model agreement contemplating 75 per cent of the net receipts being dispersed among the investors with the remainder going to the producer.

This practice of a 75/25 split is common in Australia, following its introduction in early agreements approved by the Australian Film Development Corporation and maintained by the Australian Film Commission. Its choice and acceptance, however, has been on an ad hoc basis and it is completely out of tune with British and American film production practice and Australian live theatre production practice. Normally the split between money elements of the film and the creative elements of production worldwide is on a 50/50 basis, and a very successful producer may be able to command as much as a 60/40 split in his favor.

It is easy to argue that the extreme difficulties experienced in attracting private finance for film production in Australia, forced the AFDC to accept and endorse a less favorable split for producers than might have been warranted if things had been different. But the reality is that putting a film's finance together is extremely difficult anywhere, and it is yet to be shown that it is any more difficult to attract private finance in Australia than it is in any of the main production centres of the world.

Furthermore, while giving the producer 50 per cent of the net receipts may at first glance seem over-generous, the heading "producer" may also include the profit participations of associate producer, writer and even director, as well as finder's fees participation. The producer, too, has to option the original material, get a screenplay and package together, run an office and incur substantial expense before he is even sure a project is going to get off the ground. He may, in fact, develop two or three projects before he gets off the ground. In the end the truth is that so few film producers in Australia (or anywhere) ever show any net receipts that the investors concerned, when such receipts are in fact made available, should be all the more eager to reward and nurture "the man with the nose".

Once the agreement is signed, the unit trust will be set up and the investor will receive his share of the investors' units in the trust in the proportion his investment bears to the total budget of the production. For example, on a \$100,000 film with a 75/25 investor producer

split of the net, a \$10,000 investor will receive 750 units of a 10,000 units trust. Subject to the provisions of the trust deed, these units can be assigned on request to the trustee company.

Some agreements may limit the income the unit trust receives by excluding the payment of certain foreign receipts or television sales proceeds to the funds. Further there may be a time cut-out for the investors and the fund to receive income (e.g. seven years) or a monetary cut-out (after a certain amount of profit is disbursed to the unit trust). Again these extra benefits for the producer will only be available if he has a very successful track record. When or if these cut-out points are reached ownership in the copyright of the project would revert to the producer.

## FINANCING BY A FILM DISTRIBUTION COMPANY

It is no longer uncommon in Australia for a distribution company to invest in local production. Roadshow, GUO Film Distributors (formerly BEF) and Filmways have all been involved as investors in several Australian productions over the past three years, and Columbia have recently become the first of the MPDA members to come into the Australian film industry's resurgence with *Barney*. Even so, the extent of participation by distributors in the production is markedly different to the practice in the U.S. and Britain.

The major distributors, in this case, will normally put up between 75 per cent and 100 per cent of the total budget of the production and will require the producer to enter into an agreement — which we will presently examine — giving the distributor world distribution rights to the photoplay in all media in perpetuity, first right of recoupment of investment and interest from net receipts, and a big distribution fee for all territories.

Given the high risk nature of multiple film financing at million-dollar-plus budgets, these demands may not at first sight seem unreasonable; but the reality appears to be that the agreement is weighted far more in the distributor's favor than it ought equitably to be, so that the producer rarely, if ever, sees a net return when the bottom line is drawn. Instructive reading in this regard is Mario Puzo's tongue-in-cheek, yet deadly serious piece, *When Hollywood moves in, how can Israel Win?* in the *National Times* October 25, 1976.

In Australia, the general practice appears to be that the distributor will rarely invest more

than 50 per cent of the production budget, sometimes substantially less. He will, however, want to acquire for no additional consideration Australian distribution rights to the production in all media for a set period of years, perhaps five or seven.

He will probably not require first priority for his investment from net receipts, being content rather to be treated *pari passu* with other investors, and will not charge interest on his investment. His distribution fee (25 per cent to 30 per cent) will be lower than that of the American 100 per cent investor-distributor.

In fact, therefore, save for his acquisition of limited territorial distribution rights, the Australian distributor, at this stage of industry development, may be treated in the same way as 'angel' investors, except that simultaneously with the execution of Precedent 7a, a distribution agreement will also have to be entered into.

We shall discuss distribution agreements for completed and in-production films in a later article in this series, and will provide a precedent of that form of agreement.

In the expectation, however, that distribution companies within Australia, either Australian or American owned, may eventually involve themselves in 100 per cent funding of individual productions, we examine in more detail the production agreement or PD<sup>2</sup> as it is termed, a precedent of which will be available in the loose leaf binder service referred to above. Each of the major U.S. distribution companies have their own long form agreements, some running into hundreds of pages.

However, they all cover certain basic points.

All PDs include the technical and creative requirements of the photoplay, including the name of the line producer, the director, the stars, the nationality of the film, the color process and aspect ratio<sup>3</sup>, the budget, the delivery date of first print and the delivery date of negative, music and effects track, and preprint materials. Details on cutting, titling, dubbing, foreign versions, government subsidies (if any) will be set out. Any completion guarantee details will be annexed.

The area of distribution (generally worldwide) and the period of the agreement (in perpetuity) will be set out. Distribution fees will be tabulated for different theatrical territories, and provision made for fees on outright sales, television and non-theatrical markets. A definition of distribution expenses will be provided and priorities as to recoupment of bank loans, overheads and interest established. Those to share in the profits will be set down and their shares defined.

It will be important for the aspirant producer to appreciate, at this stage, the distinction drawn in PDs between producer's gross receipts, distributor's gross receipts and distributor's net receipts.

In simple terms, a distributor's gross receipts are those sums of money which a distributor receives from exhibitors — cinemas, television networks, home-users — and other users for the right to present and exploit the film in all media. A distributor's net receipts are those amounts left to the distributor after he has made deductions for that agreed distribution fee set out in the PD.

A Producer's gross receipts are those sums received by a producer from a distributor of the film after certain agreed amounts set out in the PD (e.g. distribution expenses, interest on in-

(2) PD refers to that agreement between the producer and a distributor by which the distributor agrees to finance the production of the producer's project in return for certain distribution rights as well as the usual share of profits.

(3) Aspect Ratio or Picture Ratio is the ratio of the width of the projected image to the height of the projected image. The aspect ratio of cinemascope is approx. 2.35:1 and wide screen 1.85:1.

(1) End Money is the final sum of money which a producer may need to make up his production's budget.

TABLE 2 Where the \$3.50 goes under a Producer-Distributor arrangement.

Gross box-office receipts:	\$3.50	
Exhibitors share of gross box-office receipts:	.233	
Distributors' gross receipts:	1.17	
(33 1/3 per cent of gross box-office receipts)		
less distribution fee:	.35	(30 per cent)
Distributor's net receipts:	.82	
less distribution expenses:	.10	
Producer's gross receipts:	.72	
Investor's share of producer's gross:	.50	(70/30 split)
i.e. 14 per cent approx. of admission price available for disbursement among investors.		

Note 1: The percentage of gross box-office receipts by the exhibitor to the distributor from week to week varies according to an agreed formula, some details of which are set out in the Quarter in this issue, and further details of which will be discussed in a later article in the series. By assuming 33 1/3 per cent of gross box-office receipts we are suggesting that the film is some months into its run and has dropped down from early higher percentage of gross box-office receipts. Hence the relatively low distribution expense deduction, as most of the distribution expenses, save for continued advertising subsidy, will have been repaid.

vestment, overhead) have been deducted from the distributor's net receipts. There are many advantages for a producer in working with a major from pre-production, including the security of the total commitment to finance all production costs, including overages<sup>4</sup> and all world-wide marketing costs. Moreover, the major generally has better market penetration in the U.S. and Canada, and through territorial deals abroad can often provide immediate screen access (e.g. Gaumont in France, Tow-Toho in Japan, Rank in Britain etc.).

However, a major disadvantage for a producer with a major is their practice of cross-collateralization of profit and loss from all territories. Results of films vary from territory to territory, and with an independent his losses in a territory are his alone, whereas a major will offset them against profits elsewhere.

If the distributor he is working with does not have a world-wide organization, the producer will also need to know whether the whole or only part of the sub-distributor's receipts are considered the distributor's gross receipts and whether they will be treated on a billings or collection basis. If the film is sold in a certain territory on an outright sales basis (i.e. a fixed sum) the producer will want that fixed sum to be 100 per cent gross receipts. If the distributor also owns theatres in certain territories (e.g. Fox) there will need to be some arrangements as to "arms length dealing" by the distributor and the distributor-owned exhibitor.

Other items of the distributor's gross receipts include sound track album royalties, music publishing income (usually a percentage of the music publisher's share after deducting writer royalties, if applicable) and ancillary rights (e.g. television series, remakes and sequel rights).

The producer, depending on his clout, may argue that he should, for example, be entitled to retain the right to produce a remake. The extent to which any of the producer's rights are

severable from the PD will always depend on the strength and track record of the producer. Merchandising rights (e.g. toys, and games based on characters in the photoplay) can also be valuable, and are generally part of the distributor's gross receipts under a PD.

The distribution fee, which the distributor will deduct from his gross receipts to calculate his net receipts, varies from territory to territory. In Australia it averages between 25 per cent and 30 per cent; in the U.S. and Canada it varies between 30 per cent and 35 per cent; in Britain 30 per cent to 40 per cent; and 35 per cent to 45 per cent in other territories. Different distribution fees may be set for non-theatrical and television sales and are lower in those theatrical territories where an outright sale is made (e.g. 10 per cent to 15 per cent).

Australian producers should note the difference between Precedent 7a and the PD, in that in the 'angel' agreement the distribution fee is charged after all deductions have been made; in the PD the distribution fee is charged before any deductions are made — another benefit to the 100 per cent financier. The distribution expenses, which the distributor will deduct from his net receipts to calculate the producer's gross receipts, include the costs of prints, advertising, freight, duty (if applicable), handling charges and withholding tax.

Much of the advertising deductions will include items allocated to particular cinemas known in Australia as "advertising subsidy" and in the U.S. as "co-operative advertising". Generally this amount, over and above the theatre advertising 'normal' is shared 50/50 between exhibitor and distributor, although in certain film hire deals the distributor may pay 100 per cent.

Producers may want to limit the amount of money a distributor will be able to deduct for prints, advertising, etc. territory by territory. Normally, however, when a distributor has 100 per cent financed the production, he will not allow the producer any consultative or other rights and will in effect do as he pleases. Hopefully, he will act in good faith or use his best efforts and clauses to ensure these are sometimes inserted.

A distributor's decision on treating the cost of manufacturing trailers and advertising accessories as a distribution expense and income from their sale or hire as a distribution receipt will generally depend on whether the ad sales department in a particular territory runs at a profit or loss.

The producer's final share of gross receipts has been estimated by Tom Laughlin, producer and star of the *Billy Jack* series, to average out at 20 per cent of the gross box-office (i.e. the money the exhibitor receives at the ticket box). Table 2 below traces the typical \$3.50 admission fee to the producer's share of the profit stage and beyond.

The PD agreement has some other important clauses. It sets out the amount of producer's compensation. It normally gives the distributor all artistic approvals, although the producer will make preliminary selections. The distributor's right to abandon the project and take it over are also specified.

While with 'angel' type agreements a producer will normally be on a contract for personal services, with the trustee company setting out his rights and obligations, in a PD many elements of the producer's service contract are incorporated. We will discuss these clauses in more detail in a later article when we deal with producer service contracts.

Under a PD the producer will sometimes retain the right of final cut, but the distributor will be allowed to make censor and television cuts. Billing requirements are also defined.

Remedies for breach of the agreement by either party are enumerated and there are detailed accounting clauses on the form and method of payment of the producer's gross receipts (if any) and the provision of statements. The producer should try to obtain full audit rights to the distributor's books worldwide. He will probably be restricted by the distributor to head office records.

In the next issue, *Financing the Production* (2) will deal with other forms of financing including pre-sales, negative pick-ups, state and federal government funding, limited partnerships and tax shelters. ★

- (4) Overages are those sums of money (if any) by which the producer's final budget exceeds the budget (and contingency) which has been the basis for the amount of production funds raised.

## Precedent 7A

### Investment agreement: private or 'angel' investor and producer.

THIS AGREEMENT made the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 1974 BETWEEN

film producer (hereinafter called "The Producer") of the first part

AND (hereinafter called the "Investor") of the other part WHEREAS:

A. The Producer and the Investor have mutually agreed that wherever in this agreement the following terms appear they shall have (where not inconsistent with the content) the meanings respectively set out opposite the said terms as follows:

- (i) "the project": the making in and around \_\_\_\_\_ of a first class feature sound film in color, shot on 35mm stock, presently entitled \_\_\_\_\_ based on the screenplay of the same written by \_\_\_\_\_ and the release of the said film for screening in theatres in Australia and elsewhere;
- (ii) "the Producer": the said \_\_\_\_\_ and its respective legal personal representatives successors and assigns;
- (iii) "the Investor": the person/persons company of companies abovenamed and his/her/its or their respective legal personal representatives successors and assigns and where the Investor comprises more than one legal entity such entities (unless otherwise stated) shall be deemed to be investing equally as between themselves;
- (iv) "Investors": the group of persons firms and companies including the Investor subscribing the amounts which collectively make up the fund;
- (v) "fund": an amount of \_\_\_\_\_ to be raised by the Producer being the amount estimated to be needed for the project;
- (vi) "costs": all costs and expenses incurred for the project both before and after the completion of production of the said film and its first release for public screening and whether before or after the execution of this agreement including but not limited to amounts payable to authors script and dialogue writers producers directors film and sound studios camera sound lighting make-up wardrobe and other technicians and experts advisers and assistants actors performers and extras electricians carpenters and other studio and location staff musicians expenses of providing exterior and interior sets costumes properties furniture furnishings and special and other effects transport legal auditing and accounting insurance completion guarantee costs and advertising services copying of scripts making of

master negatives and prints of the said film together with management bank and office expenses, and bank and finance charges;

- (vii) "net profit": the gross receipts received from the project less costs.

B. The Producer has all necessary licenses and permissions from the owners of all copyrights and performing rights involved in the project.

C. For the purposes of the project the Producer is establishing the fund to which the amount to be subscribed by the Investor will be paid together with all other amounts subscribed by investors all of whom shall respectively be entitled to shares of the profits of the project as hereinafter set forth.

D. The Investor has agreed to subscribe to the fund the sum stated in Clause 1. below.

NOW THIS AGREEMENT WITNESSETH and the parties hereto mutually agree as follows:

1. The Investor shall subscribe \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the fund by paying this amount immediately to the Producer. Subscriptions to the fund and all receipts from the project shall be paid only to a current account with Bank of \_\_\_\_\_ styled \_\_\_\_\_

All receipts from the project shall be credited to and form part of the fund. The liability of the Investor in connection with the project shall not exceed the said amount to be subscribed by the Investor.

2. The Producer shall cause proper books and account of records for the project to be kept by \_\_\_\_\_ who as soon as practicable shall draw up accounts for the period of completion of the making of the said film and thereafter for each four week period. These accounts shall show a true and fair view of the gross receipts costs and net profit of the project for the relevant period and the amount of the fund at the end of such period.

3. Immediately after the fund is fully subscribed the Producer shall cause to be set up a unit trust fund styled \_\_\_\_\_ in which the Producer and investors will hold units in the proportion each investor's subscription to the fund bears to the total fund and as to the Producer 25 per cent. The Producer will at the same time appoint a trustee for the trust and the Producer will assign all his right title and interest in the copyright of the project including the literary purchase agreement dated the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ a copy of which is annexed hereto as schedule 1 to the trustee to hold on behalf of all the unit holders in the trust.

4. The Producer on receipt of the accounts for the period to completion of the making of the said film and each second set of accounts thereafter shall decide what amount should be carried forward as a reserve against future costs of the project and any amount by which the fund exceeds such amount shall be appropriated as follows:

three quarters between the Investors in the proportion in which each of the Investor's subscription bears to the total subscriptions to the fund and as to one quarter to the Producer.

After the fund is fully subscribed the Investor shall not be entitled to receive any payment from the Producer in relation to the Investors' subscription except as set out above and the Producer shall not be entitled to require the investor to re-invest any moneys paid or repaid to the investor under this clause.

5. This agreement does not constitute a partnership between the Producer and the investor. Except as provided by Clause 10 all matters

relating to the project including the expenditure of the fund shall remain in the entire and sole discretion of the Producer and the Producer's decision on all such matters shall be final and binding on all parties.

6. Nothing herein contained shall prevent the Producer from subscribing an amount of money to the fund and as such being an investor in the project on the same terms and conditions as other investors.

7. In the event of the said film being sold for television all royalties or other money received or receivable therefor shall be treated as receipts of the project as shall all royalties and other money received or receivable from screening of the said film in all countries and in sub-standard width films.

8. Any notice delivery and all payments made pursuant to this agreement may be served made or paid by one party to the other by sending same by prepaid letter post to the address of the party for whom same is intended as appearing or to any solicitor acting on its behalf or by leaving same at such address or the office of such solicitor and the notice if sent by post shall be deemed to have been served twenty four (24) hours after post.

9. The Purchaser may assign and transfer this agreement or all or any part of its rights hereunder to any person, firm or corporation without limitation, and this agreement shall be binding upon the heirs to the benefit of the parties hereto and their successors, representatives and assigns, forever.

10. Any dispute arising from this agreement shall be subject to the provision of the Arbitration Act Victoria 1958 (as amended) and the decision of an arbitrator so appointed shall be final and binding on both parties.

11. Wherever the context of this agreement requires it the masculine shall be deemed to include the feminine and the neuter, and the singular shall be deemed to include the plural, and when more than one person or party executes this agreement as the "Owner" then each and all of the persons, firms or corporations executing this agreement as the "Owner" shall be deemed to have jointly and severally made and entered into all of the terms, covenants, agreements, representations and warranties herein contained and shall be jointly and severally obligated and bound thereby, excepting only where otherwise expressly indicated to the contrary herein.

12. The proper law of this contract shall be the law of the State of Victoria.

13. This agreement, including all of the foregoing provisions and all exhibits made a part hereof, expresses the entire understanding and agreement of the parties hereto, and replaces any and all prior agreements or understandings, whether written or oral, relating in any way to the subject matter of this agreement. This agreement cannot be modified, amended or supplemented except by a written instrument or instruments executed by each of the parties hereto.

IN WITNESSETH whereof the parties have hereunto executed this agreement the day and the year first hereinbefore written.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ the said \_\_\_\_\_ in the presence of: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ the said \_\_\_\_\_ in the presence of: \_\_\_\_\_

the said \_\_\_\_\_ in the presence of: \_\_\_\_\_



# 5th INTERNATIONAL PERTH FILM FESTIVAL 1976

Scott Murray

If last year was a slight treading of water for the Perth International Film Festival, this year it pushed ahead again. Continuing its policy of championing new and undiscovered directors, and independent filmmaking, the festival presented films by, among others, Hans Jürgen Syberberg, Marguerite Duras, Jean-Marie Straub and Daniele Huillet, Christine Lipinska, Eduardo de Gregorio and André Téchiné.

It was, like its predecessors, a very political festival and by its very comprehensiveness covered many issues in depth. The Chilean coup d'état, for example, was examined by two probing films, *La Batalla de Chile: Coup d'état and Companero*.

In this review of the festival I have attempted to comment on as many films as possible and have reviewed all those I considered of major importance, with the exception of any already given critiques in previous issues, such as *Loose Ends*, *Je Suis Pierre Rivière*, and *Land of Promise*.

Overall it was an excellent festival, abounding with films of unique interest, *Moses and Aaron*, *Burra Sahib*, or political insight, *The Confessions of Winifred Wagner*, *Iracema*. It is to be hoped the fears of the organizers are not realized and that the festival can continue to exist, by virtue of its daringness alone it plays a vital role in exposing important films to the Australian public.

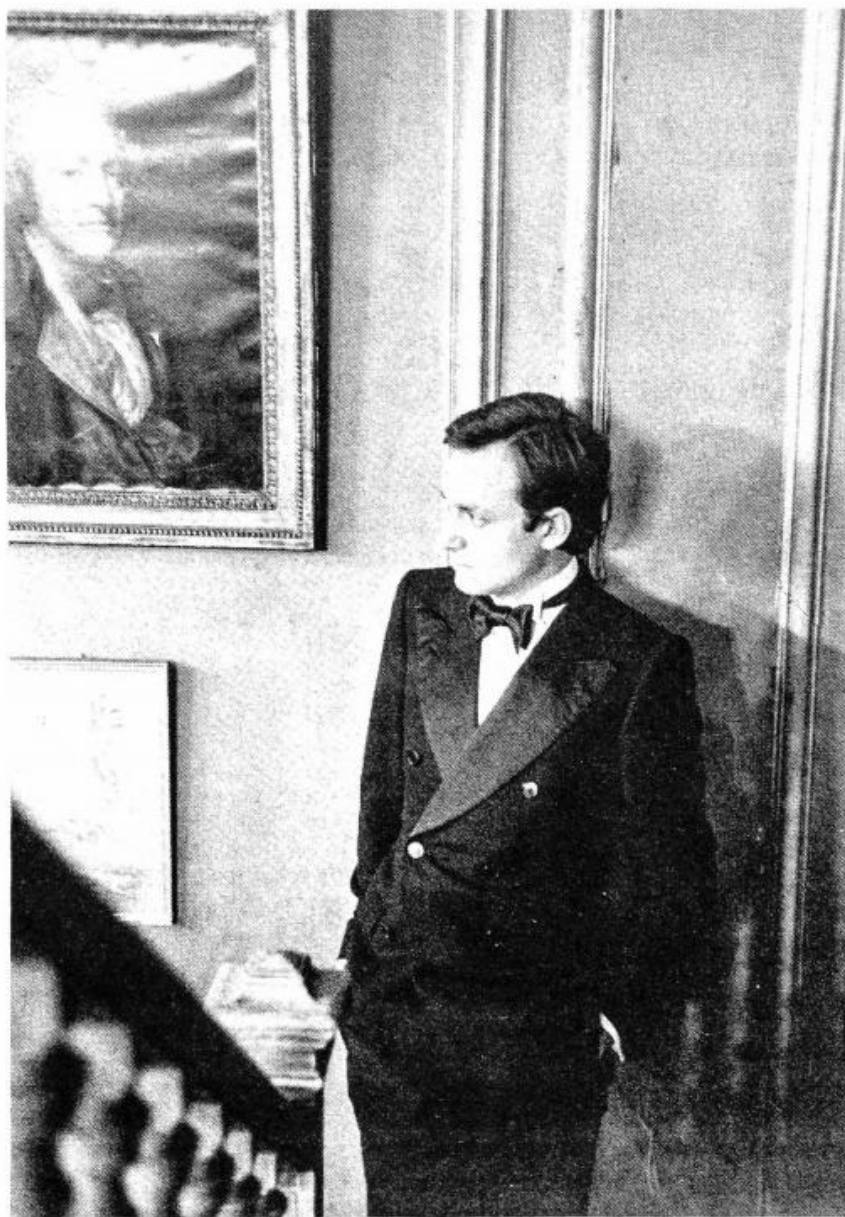
Though World War 2 was hardly a major issue of the festival, two films did suggest a growing awareness of the war's implications among a new generation of filmmakers, one of whom in particular has provided a lead: Hans Jürgen Syberberg's *The Confessions of Winifred Wagner* is a masterpiece, not only as a record of a woman's life, but also as a probing of the realities of National Socialist Germany. It is devoid of false analysis, mock anger, and makes its appeal to reason rather than to the emotions. Yet, it remains the warning of such horrors occurring again: "It is relatively easy not to be a Nazi when there is no Hitler around."

*The Confessions of Winifred Wagner* is, in its original form, a five-hour interview with Winifred Wagner, directress of the Bayreuth Festival during the Hitler era, personal friend of the Führer and grand-daughter of the composer Richard Wagner. Unfortunately, at the time of the festival only two hours had been subtitled into English, and it was in this abridged version that the film was shown.

The footage selected was mostly political, and it is Winifred's comments on Hitler and National Socialism ("we erstwhile National Socialists...") that have caused the most comment, especially her fond recollections of "Wolf", as she nicknamed Hitler.

She describes him as a warm and understanding man, thoroughly dedicated to his cause and only too aware of his monstrous burden of rebuilding the Reich. Her children thought of him as their uncle, and his visits were always welcomed by the family. As she says: "If Hitler were to walk in the door today, I would be just as pleased, just as delighted to see him... I will always remember him with gratitude."

It is this forthrightness, together with a refusal to exculpate herself in front of the camera, that rivets one's attention. Never has one been offered such an insight into how National Socialists felt and reacted



Marguerite Duras' *India Song*: magical but dull.

during Hitler's reign.

Is Winifred Wagner unrepentant, or is she simply honest in refusing to fool herself and us? Obviously this point will be argued among all those who see the film. Personally, I opt for the latter explanation and accept the contradiction of admiring her for her intelligence and strength, while feeling horrified by her lack of concern about the evils of the Reich.

This said, it must be stated that the film really belongs to Syberberg. That we gain so much from Winifred's confessions is evidence of the excellence of his straightforward camera-work and editing. And his final warning of the stupidity of dismissing Hitler as a freak is a valuable one.

As the *Salzburger Nachrichten* said in reference to the film: "Hitler was a participant, not an unfortunate exception."

The second film notable for its clear-headedness was André Halimi's *Chantons sous l'Occupation*, a study of Parisian collaborators during the oc-

cupation. Similar in style to Marcel Ophüls' *La Chagrin et la Pitié*, Halimi's film concentrates on entertainers, particularly those who flagrantly abetted German rule. The restaurant Maxim's, for example, flourished, as did many other night spots. French entertainers made fortunes during the war, and German officers, in an attempt to demonstrate their refinement, promoted numerous exhibitions of painting and sculpture.

Most of Halimi's footage is newsreel, and this is intercut with recent interviews of those who still recall Paris at its wartime gayest. There are shots of fashion parades, of Maurice Chevalier's controversial trip to Germany, horse-drawn Citroëns, and a retelling of Arletty's rebuttal of the French President's claim that she courted Nazis: "But Monsieur le Président, you don't fuck as well as they do."

Halimi does not encourage easy condemnation. The lack of resistance by the French has often intrigued observers, and while not answering all the ques-

tions, *Chantons sous l'Occupation* does suggest several possible explanations. The entertainers, though, had never had it so good.

Marguerite Duras' *India Song* is a drone, sometimes magical, sometimes dull. Mostly set in the French Embassy in Calcutta, it falls into three sections: the pre-party life of Anne-Marie Stretter (Delphine Seyrig), the Embassy reception, and Anne-Marie's suicide.

The film is very thinly populated with only Anne-Marie, her two lovers, two cultural attachés, and one or two briefly-glimpsed guests. The characters do not speak as such, though the soundtrack is a litany of monotonous voices describing what is to happen or what has already happened. Nor are these levels of time necessarily linear or chartable: at the reception, for instance, we see Anne-Marie and her death-photo on the piano, surrounded by burning incense.

Given the calculated pace of each of the actors' movements, the voices and the melancholy score by Carlos d'Alessio, the film risks descending into intellectual pretension, of becoming like a highly decorated balloon so over-inflated that the designs begin to crack. *India Song* is certainly guilty of this at times, but where it really does succeed is in the hypnotic state it induces. One is lulled by the endless repetition; oft-repeated phrases, such as, "Michael Richardson, still waiting for his *India Song*", ultimately attain a kind of lyricism and the detachment we feel at the beginning gradually gives way to involvement.

The most interesting aspect of *India Song* is probably the mirror, though it does not ultimately become the character Duras intended. The mirror is pivoted, in that most shots contain an object, or person, and its reflection. But because Duras has divided the room along two axes, and hence has reduced herself to two basic camera positions and lenses, the angle of reflection remains constant.

Consequently, the mirror never surprises us, and the knowledge of a person's placement is enough to determine the subsequent reflection. As a result, the mirror is lifeless.

Probably the most appreciated effort of the festival organizers this year, was the tracking down of Jacques Rivette's *Out One Spectre*. This 270-minute film is a re-edited version of his earlier, 760-minute *Out One*. However, *Spectre* is not, as Rivette continually insists, a mere condensation of *Out One*; it is a film in its own right — and a difficult film to describe, much less criticize. Its plot is deliberately tangled with misleading threads, false explanations and, at times, directorial confusion.

In the original conception, Rivette intended telling the stories of several separate groups around Paris. The groups would never meet each other, but their histories would be intercut. However, Rivette abandoned the idea and chose to link all the groups with the Jean-Pierre Léaud character, just as he linked the different levels of *Céline et Julie Vont en Bateau* with the device of the candy. But while the Léaud character is most interesting and his search intriguing, it ultimately undermines and destroys the whole.

On reading *L'Histoire des Treize*, by Honoré de Balzac, Léaud becomes convinced that there exists, or existed, a





Jacques Rivette's *Out One Spectre*, specially tracked down for this year's festival.

similar group of 13 in Paris, perhaps formed during the riots of May 1968. (The film is set in April and May of 1970.) He finds clues in Lewis Carroll's *Hunting of the Snark* and pursues his goal with passion, but to no avail: one is left with little choice but to accept that the group never existed (though Rivette and most of his admirers differ on this, Rivette stating that the group is quite fictitious). Consequently, one feels somewhat cheated, the search having been nothing but a ruse designed to link disparate elements. And in the face of Léaud's great intrigues, the histories of the groups lack interest. The serpent has caught its tail. However, it is always a mistake to take Rivette's films too seriously, for they are mostly delicate comedies (particularly *Céline et Julie*). They exist as spider-webs of illusion, occasionally glinting in the sun and only too glad to entrap any passing observer.

As if to supplement *Spectre*, Eduardo de Gregorio's *Serail* was also shown. This first feature by the screenwriter of *Céline et Julie*, *Duelle*, *Noroi* and *Phénix* (all by Rivette, the last two still unreleased), and Bertolucci's *The Spider's Strategy*, is also a wisp of illusion.

Eric Sange (Corin Redgrave), author of B-grade mystery novels, becomes intrigued by a mysterious house in the French countryside. On different visits he separately encounters Ariane (Bulle Ogier) and Agathe (Marie-France Pisier), both claiming to be the sole owner and resident. Captivated, he buys the house and moves in with the women and their cook (Leslie Caron), and attempts to write a novel around the house and its occupants. The intrigue continues with mysterious passages, midnight visitors, and so on, till Sange is devoured, in the final scene, by the house itself.

One could debate endlessly whether it is the house, the women, or indeed Sange's novel, that creates the illusion. Not that it really matters, since it is clearly the entertainment that is supposed to count, but I found the film both trivial and dull. I suspect, however, as with Rivette's films, the question is not really one of good or bad filmmaking, but of what taste one has in confectionery.

Von Kleist based his famous novel, *Die Marquise von O...* on the essay of Montaigne, *On Inebriety*. Now, French director Eric Rohmer has made a film of the von Kleist novel, and a curious film it is: slow, picturesque and, most notably, given to passages of silence. Following on a series of the talkiest films, *La Marquise D'O...* is strikingly spare in its use of dialogue.

Quite clearly, Rohmer's interest lies elsewhere, in the creation of painterly scenes; and they are scenes not shots, for unlike Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon*, the individual shots cut together well. Nestor Almendros' lighting is excellent and greatly aids Rohmer's exercise in style.

But what of the concerns of von Kleist? Here, Rohmer has misjudged. The pace is too often allowed to flag, and the plot to often set aside to allow the director to work on a tableau. As a result, the distress of the heroine concerns us little.

During some local warring in Lombardy in 1799, a marquise (Edith Clever) is saved from rape by a handsome count (Bruno Ganz). However, while in a drugged sleep she is compromised by him, and several months later finds she has the symptoms of pregnancy. Unaware of the pregnancy's origin, she is driven from her home and retreats to the country where the remorse-stricken Count finds her and declares his love. The "rapist" is asked, via a newspaper advertisement, to declare himself and to everyone's alarm, the Count appears.

It is a delightfully curious tale, but, stretched to breaking-point by Rohmer, it loses its poignance. In addition our credence is severely strained by the over-long section on the "fake" pregnancy. However, once the Marquise is pursued by the Count, the pace quickens, and his unannounced visit is most romantic, nicely set in a magnificent but overgrown garden.

An element of suspense arises over the question of whether the Count will declare himself, and though the result is never seriously in doubt, the story holds one's attention throughout.

André Téchiné's *Souvenirs d'en France* is a delightful oddity, its mixture of styles as difficult to follow as the title is to translate. (Richard Roud's attempt is *Memories of Infancy*.) Taking the broad sweep of France's political history in this century, it comments satirically on the most important moments by setting all its events in provincial France. Thus, the takeover of French industry after the war by the Americans is alluded to by the daughter-in-law (Marie-France Pisier) marrying an American soldier, travelling to the U.S., and returning as a business-woman committed to taking over the family business. And Jeanne Moreau, in an excellent supporting role, plays a seamstress rising to dominance in the family hierarchy. In one beautiful scene, Moreau uninterestedly prepares herself a meal, only to leave it uneaten on the table as she leaves hurriedly into the night.

Téchiné invests the whole affair with great pace and the moments of humor

are nicely reinforced by Philippe Sarde's excellent score. To appreciate all the nuances it would be helpful to see the film twice, and though some of the film references are noticeably forced it remains a captivating and varied entertainment.

*Devices and Desires*, a black and white film of 55 mins by Giles Foster, is, like *Burra Sahib*, destined to become a classic. For me, it is the definitive portrait of the eccentric British clergyman, Frederick Treves' performance as the Rev. Granville Moulton, a Somerset minister convinced that his archaeological diggings have uncovered a former capital of Roman Britain, is brilliant.

In the representation of that most sacred of monsters, the local preacher, he displays a presence and wit few actors have ever brought to such a role.

*Burra Sahib*, another British film, is Nick Gifford's portrait of his three uncles, all 'tail-enders' of the British Raj in India. The uncles run one of the world's last taxidermy works and Gifford's silent observation of them as they go about their work is quite magical.

When one uncle goes duck-shooting Gifford provides us with a definitive montage of the waiting, shooting and aftermath. A beautiful, quiet and strangely sad, poetic work.

Quite a discovery of this year's festival was Jorge Bodansky's *Iracema*, a loaded parable about a 14 year-old girl driven to prostitution by the speed and brutality of Brazil's "economic miracle". While the girl Iracema stands for old Brazil, raped by economic expansion, the truck driver she gets a lift from represents the "new deal" with his fortune amassed from the destruction of the country's natural resources.

*Iracema's* moral and economic decline is both well handled and involving, and is nicely set off by Bodansky's powerful recreation of the 'new' Brazil: burnt forests, slavery rackets, mass exploitation and a proliferation of Coca-Cola machines. At times the parable is over-stretched, but the directness of its assault is always disturbing.

*Iracema* is an anagram for America which is somewhat confusing as the girl represents old Brazil both before and after American intervention.

One extremely moving film was Martin Smith's *Companero*, a 60-minute British documentary on Chilean folksinger Victor Jara. Through the eyes of Jara's widow, Joan Turner, we relive Jara's support for Salvador Allende, the momentum of the movement behind the President and the tragic deaths of both Allende and Jara. Turner's harrowed face and hesitant voice evoke great feeling

and this has made the film the centre of a world-wide political debate. There are those who claim it does nothing but provoke the easy response while others, who reject the many coldly polemic films made today, rejoice at *Companero's* humanism.

Another film on the Chilean coup d'état was Patricio Guzman's invaluable documentary record, *La Batalla de Chile: Coup d'état*. This second part of his trilogy minutely details the fall of the Allende government and suggests an extremely plausible chain of events. The role of the truck-drivers' strike, reputedly financed by the CIA, is well explained and demonstrates its importance in crushing Allende.

The overhead shots of the thousands of trucks assembled in a quarry are quite extraordinary, as is the much-discussed opening where a cameraman films his own death: a gunman aiming at the camera from across the street, firing, and the camera toppling.

What is not explained is why Allende acted as he did when the forces of oppression were so obviously stacked against him. Was it naivete or a noble refusal to back away when all was lost? Perhaps it is still too soon after the events for such explanations. In the meantime, Guzman's film is a marvellous record of what should not be forgotten.

The most intriguing of the political films was the Berwick Collective's *Nightcleaners*, a documentary on the exploitation of night-shift cleaners. When making such a film it seems inevitable that a decision has to be taken on whether the film is on the exploited group or for them. Obviously it is possible to do both, but *Nightcleaners* does neither.

Part of the reason is that this 90-minute black and white documentary is almost physically impossible to watch, virtually every second shot being a black-spacer. The image, therefore, cuts on and off at a rate of once every five to 10 seconds.

Granted the technique dislocates us in space-time, but the step the directors wish us to take—to understand, through our exposure to monotony, the monotony of the nightcleaners' existence—can be made only mentally, not emotionally.

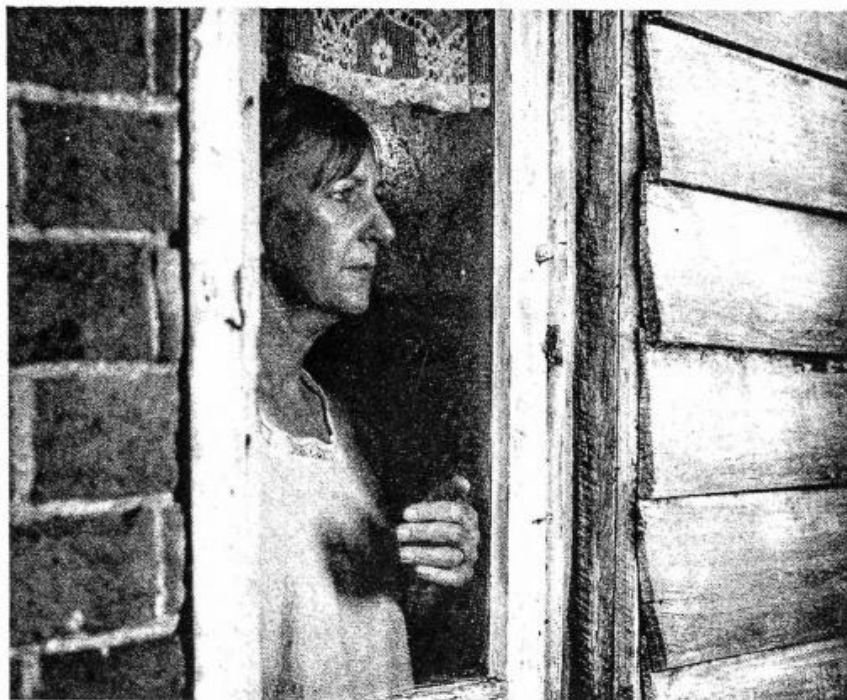
So, the film is little help to its subjects, (not surprisingly it was deserted by all but one of the cleaners originally involved) and at the time inadequate as a spur to social change.

Another film which appeared to leave its subjects behind was Richard Cohen's *Hurry Tomorrow*, an unrelenting attack on certain practices of mental "health". Better than any film I have seen, it charts the nightmare of incarceration, of the use



Andre Techine's *Souvenirs d'en France*: odd but captivating.



Gillian Armstrong's *The Singer and the Dancer*. Ruth Cracknell as Mrs. Bilson.Thomas Koerfer's *Der Gehülfe*: detailing the bourgeois fixations of the Swiss.

of drugs without reference to the patient, of the sheer mental and physical brutality that passes as treatment. And, most importantly, it argues the inviolable rights of a mental patient.

Shot in five weeks for \$15,000 at the Californian State Mental Hospital, it is, at the level of expose, an extraordinary achievement. But at the level of concern for the patient's ultimate welfare it shows disquietingly little involvement. Not one positive suggestion is made regarding alternative treatment, and in the hurry to expose the exposable, the patients have been forgotten.

**Hollywood on Trial**, by David Helpen jun., was a disappointing documentary on the House of Un-American Activities investigation into Hollywood in 1947. A lot of excellent old footage is used, but the editing lacks inspiration and at 101 minutes the film tended to drag insufferably. Better films have been made on the investigation and the "Hollywood Ten", and this one's only real claim is a last, sad interview with Dalton Trumbo, and a disturbing one with an extremely hedgy (and justifiably so) Edward Dmytryk.

Sung Tsun Shou's *Ghost of the Mirror*

was a fairly forgettable piece of routine Hong Kong fantasy. Shot on the set of *Touch of Zen*, but without imagination, it devotes an over-long first section to a young writer's fascination with a mysterious well.

The revelation of the well's secret is most disappointing and it is only when the writer barricades himself inside the house that one's interest rejuvenates. To keep out evil spirits he has pasted his walls with pages of Buddhist script (as with the pages of the Bible in *The Omen*), but as his mind has been, on occasion, less than spiritual he has not copied out enough pages. So, through the area of ceiling he has been unable to cover, the evil dragon appears. Unfortunately, the creature amounts to no more than some inferior special effects and the climax degenerates into total farce.

Several Australian films were shown at Perth. Apart from Fred Schepisi's excellent *The Devil's Playground* (reviewed previously), there was Gillian Armstrong's *The Singer and the Dancer*, Peter Tammer and Garry Patterson's *Here's to You, Mr Robinson*, Phillip Bull's *Hard Knocks*, John Ruane's *Queensland* (reviewed elsewhere in this issue), and Roger Hudson's *Another Day*.

Armstrong's film is rewarding, yet disappointing. It is certainly better than any film she has made since *A Hundred a Day*, but it does not quite click. Ruth Cracknell's Mrs Bilson works excellently, but the intercutting which links her life with that of the young woman, Charlie, is often too forced. Elizabeth Crosby is also badly cast as Charlie and her uneasiness with the role is all too evident.

But to describe the weaknesses is to forget the film's good qualities. It has understanding and, at times, sensitivity in its description of two women out on a limb, alienated from the people they should be closest to.

The film has its humorous side, too, especially when dealing with the relationship between Mrs Bilson and her daughter, and it is stunningly shot in color by Russell Boyd. Fortunately Columbia Pictures has taken up the rights, and for once a short film of merit will get wide distribution in Australia.

*Here's to You, Mr Robinson* is great fun, and its interviews with a crazy old collector are nothing less than inspired. As entertainment, it was hardly challenged by any other film at Perth.

**Hard Knocks**, a satiric look at a footballer's rise to political prominence in the West, starts nicely but descends awkwardly into fantasy, and the inventiveness of the concept is all but buried. Had the film been played straighter, I think it would have been more successful.

If I have left my personal favorite of the festival till last it is because Straub and Huillet's *Moses and Aaron* does not openly invite criticism. Their work (excellently covered by Susan Dermody in the last issue of *Cinema Papers*) invites response, and achieves it; but the nature of the response is in itself difficult to pin down. For instance, it is difficult to describe, or indeed explain, why the opening 20-minute shot, which does nothing but focus on the nape of someone's neck as he sings the opening of Schoenberg's opera, is so involving. Nor why the minimal cinema of Straub/Huillet as a whole can so intensify the essence of a gesture or look. Occasionally this minimizing abstraction fails, as in the too-underscored orgy, but these moments are few. Instead, one is left greatly moved by the power, the relevance of this great brotherly struggle.

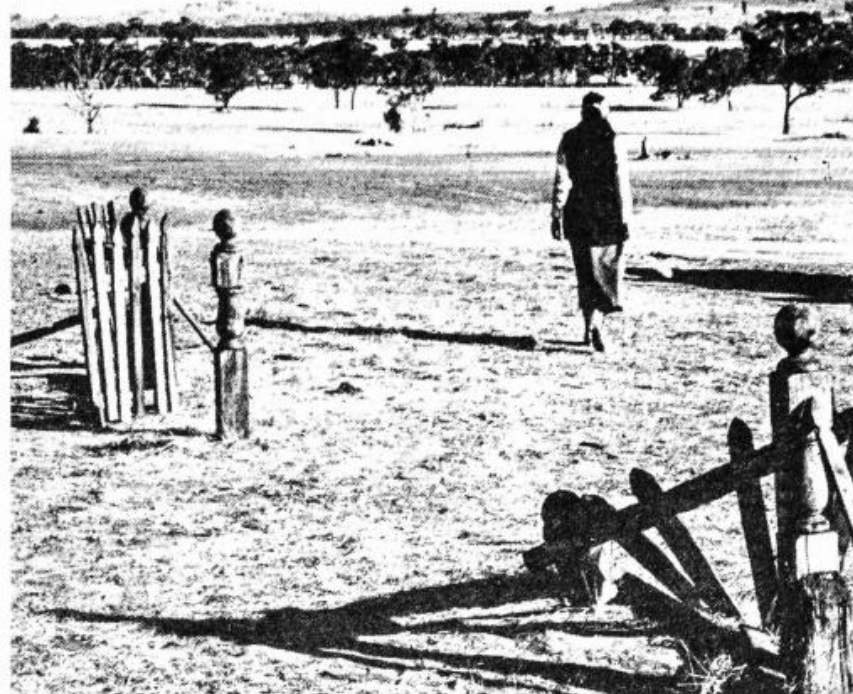
This is only the second Straub/Huillet I have seen (*History Lessons* being the other), but together they prove that cinema is nowhere near being cornered in the cul-de-sac sterility that many critics complain of. Straub and Huillet not only suggest new possibilities; they realize them.

Jorge Bodansky's *Iracema*: exploring the face of the new Brazil.*Devices and Desires* by Giles Foster: destined to become a classic.

Other films shown at Perth included Jose Fonseca Costa's *Os Demónios D'Alcacer-Kibir*; Bobby Roth's *Independence Day*; Eadweard Muybridge, Zoopraxographer, Thoms Andersen's excellent examination of the work of Muybridge which, in spite of an over-intense narration from Dean Stockwell, brings Muybridge's work to life; Thomas Koerfer's extremely disappointing *Der Gehülfe*, a film which nicely details the bourgeois fixations of the Swiss, but does so with such little feeling and enthusiasm that the film is very close to being dull; Herbert Biberman's 1952 film, *Salt of the Earth*; James Ivory's patchy but interesting *Autobiography of a Princess*, a film which should be seen for the genius of James Mason's performance alone; Alexander Kluge's very unfunny comedy, *Der Starke Ferdinand*; *Grey Gardens*; Oshima's *The Ceremony* (reviewed in last issue); Jean-Claude Labrecque's *Les Vautours*; and the over-intense, but well observed *Verlorenes Leben*, of Ottokar Runze. ★



# THE CORPORATIONS ARE COMING



## Policy statements of The Victorian Film Corporation and the NSW Interim Film Commission

The recently-formed Victorian and NSW Film Corporations set up in the wake of South Australia's successful innovation are still in their interim stages.

Both have, however, already made substantial investments in several feature film projects, including Joan Long's *Picture Show Man* (NSW), Pat Lovell's *Break of Day* (Vic.), and more recently Esben Storm's *In Search of Anna* and Phillip Adams' *The Getting of Wisdom* (both Vic.).

In an attempt to assess the role the new Corporations hope to play in developing the film industries of both states, *Cinema Papers* invited Peter Rankin, of the Victorian Film Corporation, and Paul Riomfalvy, of the NSW Interim Film Commission, to outline their policies.

In the next issue, *Cinema Papers* will look at the aims of the Queensland Film Corporation, which is yet to come into operation.

### THE INTERIM NSW FILM COMMISSION

Before the last NSW election, the state Opposition Leader, Mr Neville Wran, made a firm commitment that if a Labor government was elected, the Australian film industry would receive a boost through NSW.

Labor was elected on May 1, and within three months the Interim Film Commission was set up to advise the Government on the establishment of a film industry until such time as this task is assumed by the Corporation.

The chairman of the Commission is Mr Paul Riomfalvy, chief general manager of J. C. Williamson; the other two interim commissioners are Mr Damien Stapleton, of The Australian Theatrical Amusements Employees Association, and Mr Michael Thornhill, film producer-director.

At the time of the appointment of the Interim Film Commission, the Premier announced a government investment of \$120,000 in the Australian feature film *The Picture Show Man*, which is written and produced by Joan Long, directed by John Power, and starring Rod Taylor, John Meillon, John Ewart, Judy Morris

and a large Australian cast. Shooting began in Tamworth on October 18, and the Premier visited the set on November 6.

The Interim Film Commission advertised in all Sydney metropolitan papers, trade journals, union publications, etc., seeking submissions on the structure, aims and administration of the proposed Corporation.

More than 100 submissions have been received by the Commission to date, and it has met with various organizations, including the Writers' Guild, Producers' and Directors' Guild, and of course the Australian Film Commission. Meetings are scheduled with women's groups, producers of special attractions for children, individual producer, exhibitors and distributors.

The chairman of the Commission visited the South Australian Film Corporation in Adelaide, and also met with a Commissioner of the Victorian Film Corporation in Melbourne.

A progress report is likely to be made to the Premier at the end of November, and the final report at the end of January. If the report is approved by Cabinet, Parliament will debate the proposed legislation during the autumn session next year.

While it would be improper to publish details of the findings of the Commission at this stage, we can assure the industry that among many recommendations the Interim Film Commission will suggest to the Premier that:

- (a) The size of the Corporation and the administrative staff and relevant expenses should be kept to a minimum, and the funds allocated by Parliament for feature filmmaking should be used to the maximum for that purpose.
- (b) The Corporation should not only encourage the private sector's involvement in filmmaking, it should also actively compile a nucleus of willing investors and advise producers seeking the NSW Corporation's investment accordingly.
- (c) Department filmmaking should be channelled through the Corporation towards independent producers where possible.
- (d) Repeal and amend restrictive State legislation which is against the overall interest of the industry.
- (e) Without setting up an expensive outfit, ensure that corporation-invested Australian

films have maximum exploitation overseas.  
(f) The Corporation will not employ permanent production staff. Freelance directors, writers, crew, etc., should be employed by independent producers.

Finally, it is the determination of the Interim Film Commission that there should be no parochial attitude or jealousy among various federal and state corporations.

The proposed legislation was very elastic because the Interim Film Commission recognized the fact that the film industry was a rapidly developing industry, and we have tried to ensure that the Act establishing the Corporation would serve the purpose for many years to come.

### THE VICTORIAN FILM CORPORATION

The recently-formed Victorian Film Corporation will have a \$1 million budget for the first year of its administration. The Corporation was set up by an Act of Parliament on June 18, 1976 — "An Act to constitute a Victorian Film Corporation to encourage and promote the production, exhibition and distribution of films, television programs and other entertainments and works".

The Corporation is responsible to the Victorian Premier and Minister for the Arts, Mr R. J. Hamer. The Corporation is structured as a seven member Board.

With the exception of the Chairman, all of the Board members are actively involved in the film industry and, therefore, have vested interests. It was believed that the Board would be more effective if it was composed of people who had such involvement in the industry. In each case, the vested interests have been declared, and any member of the Board personally involved in an issue withdraws from that discussion.

The chairman is Mr Peter Rankin, an advertising executive. Mr Rankin is a member of the Victorian Council of the Arts, chairman of the Victorian government advisory committee on films and former president of the National Gallery Society of Victoria.

*Continued on P. 278.*

Above left: *The Picture Show Man*; \$120,000 was invested in this production with the establishment of the NSW Interim Film Commission.

Above right: *Break of Day*, one of two films funded by the Victorian Ministry for the Arts prior to establishing the Corporation.



# FILM CENSORSHIP LISTINGS

## Reprinted from

FILM CENSORSHIP, JULY 1976

### FILMS REGISTERED WITHOUT ELIMINATIONS

#### For General Exhibition (G)

The Blue Bird  
Bugsy Malone  
Crossroad (English subtitled version) (16 mm)  
Fimpen (English dubbed version)  
The First Swallow  
Hasret  
In Search of Noah's Ark  
Never Too Late (16 mm)  
Savage Africa (16 mm)  
Silence  
Superstar Gooty  
Tanrim Beni Bastan Yarar (Flooded Tanrim)  
The Thief of Bagdad (16 mm)  
Uphaar

#### Not Recommended for Children (NRC)

Battle of Midway  
Bingo Long Travelling All Stars and Motor Kings  
Boesman and Lena (16 mm)  
Carambaya Selaldi (Flooded Carsamba)  
Challenge to White Fang (English dubbed)  
The Demon Barber of Fleet Street (16 mm)  
The Guilty (16 mm)  
I Heard the Owl Call My Name (16 mm)  
Katherine (16 mm)  
La Patagonia Rebelde  
Los Caballeros De La Cama Redonda  
Obsession  
Odio Per Odio  
The Story of Adele H (L'Histoire D'Adele H)  
Swastika (16 mm)  
Taxi Driver  
Un Cadavere in Fuga  
Won Ton Ton, The Dog Who Saved Hollywood.

#### For Mature Audiences (M)

Aces High  
Ace Up My Sleeve  
Betty Blokk Buster Folies  
Boxer Rebellion  
Fate of Lee Khan  
The Food of the Gods  
Gator (Reduced version)  
The Invincible Sword  
Las Vegas Lady  
Lemora — A Child's Tale of the Supernatural  
Mad Dog Morgan  
Mother, Jugs and Speed  
Nudes in the Far East  
One Summer Love  
The Outlaw Josey Wales  
Skyhawk  
Squirm  
The Tenant  
Un Affare Di Cuore  
The Wedding (Wesele) (16 mm)  
Yellow-faced Tiger

#### For Restricted Exhibition (R)

Adventures of a Taxi Driver  
Cherry, Harry and Raquel  
Fantasm (Reconstructed version)  
Fighting Mad  
The House of the Lost Dolls  
If You Don't Stop You'll Go Blind.  
It's Nothing Mama Just a Game  
JD's Revenge.  
Journey Into the Beyond: The World of Supernatural.  
Little Godfather from Hong Kong  
The Omen  
Penelope Pulls It Off  
A Small Town in Texas  
Street People  
Trackdown  
Vixen!  
The Zebra Force.

### FILMS REGISTERED WITHOUT ELIMINATIONS

**Special Conditions.** (That the film be shown only to its members by the National Film Theatre of Australia.)  
Journey Into Autumn (16 mm)  
Lo Sceicco Bianco (The White Sheik) (16 mm)  
Senso (16 mm)  
The Rite (16 mm)

### FILMS REGISTERED WITH ELIMINATIONS

#### For Mature Audiences (M)

The Fast Sword (2358.00m)  
Eliminations: 7.2m (16 secs.)  
Reason: Excessive violence.  
A Man Called Tiger (a) (3072.16 m)  
Eliminations: 99.7 m (3 mins 38 secs.)  
Reason: Excessive violence.

#### For Restricted Exhibition (R)

Butterflies. (Reconstructed version) (b) (2386.00 m)  
Eliminations: 35.7 m (1 min. 18 secs)  
Reason: Indecency.  
Japanese Streetfighter (Reconstructed version) (c) (2466.70 m)  
Eliminations: 37.60 m (1 min. 22 secs)  
Reason: Excessive violence.

### FILMS REFUSED REGISTRATION.

Fantasm  
Reason: Indecency  
The Hooker Convention (16 mm)  
Reason: Indecency.  
The Life and Times of Xaviera Hollander  
Reason: Indecency.  
Lust  
Reason: Indecency

## Australian Government Gazette

Published by the Australian Government Publishing Service

September 7—September 28—November 9



GENERAL



Left: *Actas de Marusia*, one of 35 films passed for screening at this year's festivals unseen by the censor. Right: *Salon Kitty*, Tinto Brass' account of life in a Nazi brothel. Registered for restricted exhibition without eliminations.

#### Naked Magic

Reason: Indecent and excessive violence.  
Savage Man, Savage Beast. (Reconstructed version)  
Reason: Indecent and excessive violence.

### FILM CENSORSHIP, AUGUST 1976

### FILMS REGISTERED WITHOUT ELIMINATIONS

#### For General Exhibition (G)

The Amazing World of Psychic Phenomena  
Beware We Are Mad (16 mm)  
Diamonds on Wheels (Reduced version)  
The Hooded Terror (16 mm)  
Mysteries of the Gods  
Sunseed (16 mm)  
Ulysses (Odiseus)

#### Not Recommended for Children (NRC)

Attica (16 mm)  
The Big Bus  
Clint II Solitario  
Crimes at the Dark House (16 mm)  
The Crimes of Stephen Hawke (16 mm)  
Futureworld  
Logan's Run  
Night Cleaners (16 mm)  
Princess Yang Kwei Fei  
Shin Heike Monogatari (New Tales of the Taira Clan).  
Silent Movie  
Spy Story  
Via Veneto  
Who Was My Love (16 mm)  
Winstanley

#### For Mature Audiences (M)

Anti-Corruption  
Back Alley Princess  
Black Moon  
Die Marquise Von O  
El Karnak (16 mm)  
The Face at the Window (16 mm)  
Flatfoot  
Flatfoot Goes East  
Girl in Gold Boots  
Indian Summer  
The Kung Fu Girl  
Lucky Girls  
Lumiere (That's Life) (English subtitled version)  
On the Black Street.  
The Policewoman (La Poliziotta) (Italian version)  
Psychopath  
The Return of a Man Called Horse.  
The Secret Rivals.  
Special Delivery.  
Stay Hungry.  
St. Ives  
The Story of a Sin.  
Street People.  
The Teahouse.  
Terror House.  
Who Breaks . . . Pays

#### For Restricted Exhibition (R)

Breaking Point  
Ceremony  
Confessions of a Driving Instructor  
Eat My Dust  
Expose  
Finders Keepers, Lovers Weepers  
Foxy Brown  
Good Morning, Goodbye  
Justine  
Salon Kitty  
Savage Sisters  
Sex Rally  
Tango 2001  
To Nisi Tie Amartias (Hostages of Lust).  
Un Couple Parmi Tant D'Autres Mais . . . Si Pervers (A Couple so Perverse)  
The Ups and Downs of A Handy Man



#### The Virgin Wife Naked Magic.

**Special conditions** (For showing not more than twice at Sydney and/or Melbourne/Adelaide/Brisbane/Perth Film Festival and then re-exported).

Actas De Marusia  
Anno Domini  
Autobiography of a Princess (16 mm)  
The California Reich (16 mm)  
Chantons Sous L'Occupation  
Der Gehulle (The Assistant) (16 mm)  
Der Starke Ferdinand (The Strongman Ferdinand)  
Devices and Desires (16 mm)  
Fox: Faustrecht Der Freiheit (16 mm)  
Ghost of the Mirror  
Grey Gardens  
Harvest — 3000 Years (16 mm)  
Hollywood on Trial (16 mm)  
Hurry Tomorrow (16 mm)  
Independence Day (16 mm)  
India Song.  
Iracema (16 mm)  
Je Suis Pierre Riviere (16 mm)  
La Batalla De Chile  
La Pharmacie Shanghai  
La Spirale  
The Last Cause (16 mm)  
Les Vautours  
Loose Ends (16 mm)  
Moses Und Aron (Moses and Aaron)  
Mustang — The House That Joe Built (16 mm)  
Os Demonios De Alcacacer Kibir  
Out One Spectre (16 mm)  
Paule Paulander (16 mm)  
Salt of the Earth  
Serail.  
Souvenirs D'En France.  
Une Fille Unique (16 mm)  
Verlorenes Leben  
Winifred Wagner Und Die Geschichte Des Hauses Wahnfried. (16 mm)

### FILMS REGISTERED WITH ELIMINATIONS

#### For Mature Audiences (M)

Seaman No.7  
Eliminations: 14.1 m (31 secs.)  
Reason: Excessive violence

#### For Restricted Exhibition (R)

Sex and the French Schoolgirl  
Eliminations: 8.2 m (18 secs.)  
Reasons: Indecency

### FILMS REFUSED REGISTRATION

Exhibition (Soft, sub-titled version) (2605.50m)  
Reason: Indecency  
Hot Spur  
Reason: Indecency  
Mondo Erotica.  
Reason: Indecency  
Mrs Stone's Thing  
Reason: Indecency  
Super Vixens.  
Reason: Indecency and excessive violence.  
(a) Hard version previously listed in Film Censorship Bulletin No. 12/75.

### FILMS BOARD OF REVIEW

### FILMS APPROVED FOR REGISTRATION AFTER REVIEW

Naked Magic.  
Decision Reviewed: Appeal against rejection by the Film Censorship Board.  
Decision of the Board: Register the film for Restricted Exhibition.  
Street People  
Decision Reviewed: Appeal against Restricted registration by the Film Censorship Board.  
Decision of the Board: Register the film for Mature Audiences.

### FILMS NOT APPROVED FOR REGISTRATION AFTER REVIEW.

Lust  
Decision Reviewed: Appeal against rejection by the Film Censorship Board.  
Decision of the Board: Uphold the decision of the Film Censorship Board.

### FILM CENSORSHIP, SEPTEMBER 1976

### FILMS REGISTERED WITHOUT ELIMINATIONS

#### For General Exhibition (G)

Esiodoxos (Optimist)  
Let The Balloon Go (16 mm)  
The Mysterious Monsters  
Run Cougar Run  
That's Entertainment, Part 2  
Not Recommended for Children (NRC)  
Buffalo Bill and the Indians or Sitting Bull's History Lesson.  
The Gypsy  
Hercules and the Captive Women  
Il Terrore Di Notte  
Murder By Death  
A Quasiast Prezzo (Vatican Story)  
Shadow of a Hawk  
The Shootist  
Temptation  
Un Fiume Di Dollari

#### For Mature Audiences (M)

Assault on Agathon  
Baba Yaga (The Devil Witch)  
The Balance  
Bamboo Gods and Iron Men  
Duel At Forest  
F. Comme Fairbanks  
Games Gamblers Play  
Griffin and Phoenix  
The Gumball Rally  
Heroes Two  
Just A Woman  
Kidnap  
Operation Daybreak  
The Promised Land (La Tierra Prometida) (16 mm)  
Qui Comicia L'Avventura (Lucky Girls) (Italian version)  
Shout At The Devil  
Someone Behind the Door  
Summer of Secrets  
Super Spook  
Veronique Ou L'ete De Mes 13 Ans.  
Wives (Hustler)  
A Woman Under The Influence

#### For Restricted Exhibition (R)

Bottoms Up Bavarian Style  
Chinatown Capers  
Death Weekend  
Exhibition (Soft subtitled version)  
The Flying Guillotine  
High Plains Drifter  
Keep It Up Downstairs  
La Meilleure Facon De Marcher  
Legends of Lust  
More Sexy Canterbury Tales  
Mosquito  
The Old Gun  
Sex Freedom in Germany  
The Swift Fist.  
The Three Musketeers and their Sexual Adventures  
Vanessa

### FILMS REGISTERED WITH ELIMINATIONS For Restricted Exhibition (R)

Alice In Wonderland: (1974.96 m)  
Eliminations: 18.4 m (40 secs.)  
Reason: Indecency  
Super Vixens (Reconstructed version) (2781.00m)  
Eliminations: 0.8 m (2 secs.)  
Reason: Excessive violence.  
That Girl Is A Tramp. (2743.00 m)  
Eliminations: 110 m (4 mins 1 sec.)  
Reason: Indecency  
The Two Faces Of Love. (3511.04 m)  
Eliminations: 83.6 m (3 mins 2 secs.)  
Reason: Indecency

### FILMS REFUSED REGISTRATION

Bikini Bandits;  
Reason: Indecency  
Caged Women. (2249.26 m)  
Reasons: Indecency and excessive violence  
Christy.  
Reason: Indecency  
Swinging Both Ways. (2230.80 m)  
Reason: Indecency.

### FILMS BOARD OF REVIEW

### FILMS APPROVED FOR REGISTRATION AFTER REVIEW.

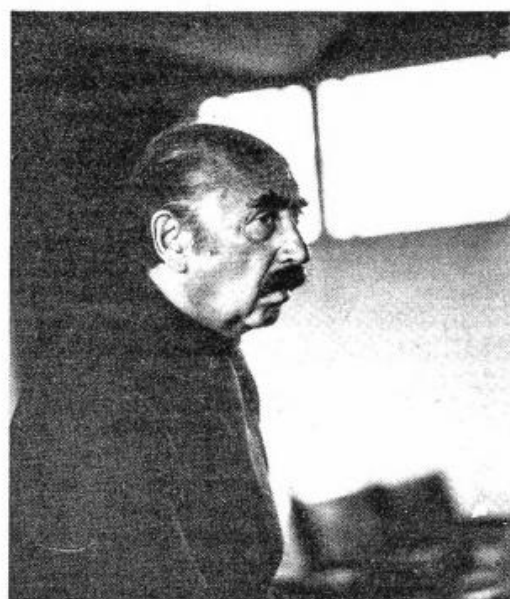
Exhibition (Soft, subtitled version) (a) (2603.50m)  
Decision Reviewed: Appeal against rejection by the Film Censorship Board.  
Decision of the Board: Register the film for Restricted Exhibition.

### FILMS NOT APPROVED FOR REGISTRATION AFTER REVIEW

Night Train Murders  
Decision Reviewed: Appeal against rejection by the Film Censorship Board.  
Decision of the Board: Uphold the decision of the Film Censorship Board. ★



# SAUL BASS



Australia's first animation film festival was held in Melbourne, between September 1 and 10. The festival, which was sponsored by the Philip Morris organization's Arts Grant program, drew entries from all over the world with the offer of more than \$5000 in prize money. The Grand Prix was won by the Soviet entry, "The Heron and the Stork", with first and second prizes going to "The Owl who Married the Goose" (Canada) and "Great" (Australia). To mark the occasion of the festival — which will become a regular event — Philip Morris invited American animator and designer Saul Bass to join the judging panel alongside local animators Alex Stitt and Bruce Petty. While in Melbourne Bass spoke to Ed Rosser.

Saul Bass began as a graphic designer in New York in the early 50s, soon moving to the West Coast where a long and stormy relationship with Otto Preminger was to begin. Impressed by his symbol for the *Carmen Jones* promotional backup, Preminger asked Bass to design the film's credits; his success here led to "doing the credits" for Billy Wilder's *The Seven Year Itch*, and this was followed by a return to Preminger for *The Man with the Golden Arm*.

From 1954 to 1972 he worked with Preminger 12 times, with Hitchcock three, once each with Anderson, Wyler, Kubrick, Wise, Kramer and Frankenheimer, and earlier this year with Gene Kelly on *That's Entertainment, Part Two*.

The force and uniqueness of a

Bass design spring partly from his insistence on total personal control throughout a project, and partly from his own very strong feelings about the nature of his work.

"I think the creation of a title has to be approached very conscientiously and with a sense of responsibility towards the film's total framework. The title has to be reflective of, responsive and related to the film entity . . . I think what is really most important to the situation is that the introduction to the film be true to its content and to its intent. Therefore, something has to be created that is expressive of that, and the relationship between the two must go deeper than just a superficial stylistic resemblance.

"The black cat sequence, for example, in *Walk on the Wild Side*, grew out of the nature of the film itself. The film was set in New Orleans during the Depression and had to do with the back-alley

Ed Rosser is a freelance writer for film and television.







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aspects of life there and the distortions and conflicts that grew out of this. The idea consisted of a cat in a back alley patrolling his turf: the cat meets an intruder, fights him, kicks him out and then resumes his patrol. This idea symbolized, in a general way, the content of the film that was to follow. I've just given you a perfectly rational explanation for the concept of that title, but it wasn't all that rational. It was really a challenge to restate, reclarify, revitalize the obvious. The more ordinary a thing is the more interesting it is as a creative point of departure."

This involvement with his work, and his love of a challenge come through strongly in his conversation, but overlaid with a sense of humor that will not allow him to take the "working in Hollywood" idea too seriously. Asked to direct the car race scenes in Frankenheimer's *Grand Prix*, he arrived at the track on the first day of shooting to find 500 extras and a dozen highly charged cars and drivers awaiting the fruits of his genius. He responded by calling an immediate coffee break and driving off down the track trying to decide what to do with everybody. Yet, out of this came one of the most exciting multi-imaged credit openings ever seen:

"The technique I used was to approach each race documentarily. I studied the track and the nature of the race, and strategically placed 10

or so cameras with the proper complement of lenses around the track. After the footage was shot I assessed it, and then restaged and shot those sections needed in order to express the intent of the race."

Credit sequences alone do not account for all his film work. Working with Hitchcock on *Psycho* he was called upon to "design" a part of the film that was to have enormous impact:

"In the West, the most sustained and influential effort at raising the standards of cinema graphics has been the work of Saul Bass, whose distinctive, economical style and ability precisely to define the character of a film in a simple graphic symbol makes his posters instantly recognizable and effective."

Roger Manvell and Lewis Jacobs  
*The International Encyclopaedia of Film.*

"Hitchcock called me in to work on certain sequences, one being the shower murder. We knew Janet Leigh was going to be stabbed to death in the bathtub; the question was how this was to be staged and how it was to be seen. The whole character of this sequence was visual, and its emotion had to be expressed through sound and image, rather than through the normal kind of story-telling information."

"When I say I designed it, I mean I drew it, laid it out, frame by frame. I made a storyboard for it, which was the exact guide for the shooting. I directed the shooting,

then worked with George Tomasini, the editor, for a few days, assembling the footage, cutting it and making it work."

"My idea was to construct a bloodless murder — to create a sense of red terror without the actual knife blows being seen. So I designed the sequence accordingly, with the exception of the last scene where we see the blood being washed away down the drain."

"Hitchcock had one cut: the 'knife-in-the-belly', which was shot backwards. The knife was withdrawn from the point where it touched the belly and the film was then run forward to make it appear that the knife was going in. This later turned out to have anti-social implications: some people were very worried about taking showers after that."

The problems posed by a title are in some ways greater than those of any other scene. Bass likes to have a script well before production begins so that he has the time not only to develop his ideas, but also

1-11 Film logos designed by Bass for multi-purpose publicity.

12 Corporation logo.

13 A frame from the epilogue to *West Side Story*.

14 Bass "designed" this sequence from *Psycho* for Alfred Hitchcock.

15 Phase IV, feature directed by Bass.

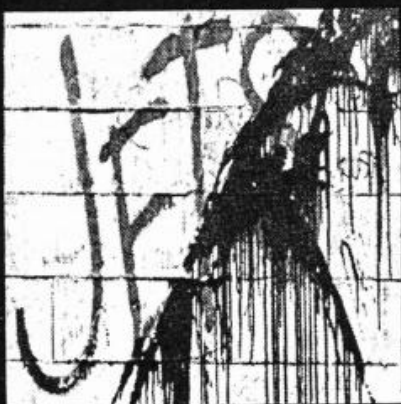
16 Frame from the title sequence in *Walk on the Wild Side*.

to explore the technical means of expressing them. Often he favors a title that takes the form of a prologue, as in his work for *The Big Country* and *West Side Story*, where the title both establishes the context of the film and states the underlying theme as well.

The notion of creativity itself is something that interests him intensely and his *Thoughts on Creativity*, later retitled *Why Man Creates*, was to win many awards apart from the Oscar it gained him:

"My intent was not to attempt to explain the creative process in physiological or psychological terms, but rather to express to the audience how it feels and what it looks like to work creatively and in a committed way. It's an emotional film, not an explaining type of film."

Bass' latest role as travelling consultant and lecturer is one that goes against the grain somewhat. The commitment he talks about is to the work itself, and he is happiest worrying over a new title design or packaging concept: it's the only kind of work he has ever wanted to do. ★



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# RESTRICTIVE TRADE PRACTICES LEGISLATION AND THE FILM INDUSTRY: THE MOTION PICTURE DISTRIBUTORS' ASSOCIATION REPLIES

In the last issue of *Cinema Papers* (Sept-Oct 76) Ransom Stoddard examined the decision by a Commissioner of the Trade Practices Commission, Dr Venturini, to reject certain clearance applications for business practices engaged in by the Motion Picture Distributors' Association (a trade association of major American importers) in their dealings with exhibitors in various states of Australia.

Following publication of the article, *Cinema Papers* contacted Mr Wes Loney, managing director in Australia of Cinema International Corporation, and present chairman of the MPDA, inviting him to reply to the Commission's decision and Ransom Stoddard's article, particularly requesting him to detail how the Commission's refusal of clearance might alter the trading practices of the MPDA members with exhibitors. (Mr Loney replied, on the condition that *Cinema Papers* publish his response in full). *Cinema Papers* accordingly sets out the unexpurgated text below, in spite of the fact that a substantial number of its paragraphs have already been published in the *Financial Review* and the *Australasian Cinema*. Paragraph numbers have been added to the MPDA letter for easy reference.

Following the MPDA letter is Ransom Stoddard's reply.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of October 14, inviting me to respond to the article in your September/October issue on the Trade Practices Commission's decision on clearance applications by my Association.

I am pleased to know that you are interested in presenting "as balanced a view as possible", as Mr Stoddard's article did anything but that. It reprinted sections of Dr Venturini's decision and the Motion Picture Distributors' Association notice of withdrawal of the applications and termination of the agreements concerned. It did not print any of the several other communications which passed between the Association's solicitors and the Commission, which were placed on the public register, and which clearly documented and substantiated the MPDA's objections to the decision. The Association's viewpoint was further expressed in my letter to the *Financial Review* (July 22) and to *The Australasian Cinema* (August 5).

Two of the applications involved agreements

entered into by members of the Association in order to meet requests by the Queensland Exhibitors' Association for certain concessions. These agreements were entered into with the support and approval of the Theatres and Films Commission of Queensland. Two of the other agreements, for which clearance was sought, were for standard forms of film hiring contract, one covering South Australia and the other Victoria and Tasmania. In NSW there is a statutory form of film hiring contract prescribed under the Cinematograph Films Act. The South Australian form was adopted by members of the Association in response to requests by exhibitors in South Australia for a common form of contract. The standard form was settled by the Crown Solicitor for South Australia, and a copy lodged for record purposes in the office of the Premier of South Australia. The document followed very closely the NSW statutory form. The standard form for Victoria and Tasmania was adopted at the request of the Exhibitors' Association and was based on the NSW statutory form. The final application for clearance was one for an agreement in relation to exhibitors who had seriously defaulted in making payments to a distributor to be placed on a 'payment-in-advance' list. Authorization was also sought for that agreement.

## Paragraph 4

In June 1975, the Commission requested a meeting with the MPDA to obtain information relating to the applications, and on June 25, 1975 a meeting took place. At that meeting the Commission's representatives asked questions concerning some of the clauses in the standard form of contract. No indication was given to the Association that the agenda for the meeting had been changed, and that the Commission had, in fact, begun an inquiry into the film industry. At this meeting, following a written request dated February 25, 1975 by the Association's solicitors, the Commission's representatives agreed that the applications would not be decided against the Association without reference being made back to it and the Association being given the opportunity of presenting further material. A subsequent memorandum from our solicitors to the Commission confirmed this agreement.

Because some of the questions asked at this meeting appeared to have no particular relationship to the clearance applications, on

June 26, 1975 our solicitors asked the Commission whether the terms of reference were limited to dealing with the clearance applications. They were told the Commission had decided to conduct an inquiry into the industry. Our solicitors then requested that the processing of the clearance applications be kept separate and apart, as far as practicable, from any wider inquiry the Commission wished to undertake. It emerged that a request for some documents at the June 25 meeting had not been made for the purpose of dealing with the clearance applications, but for the purpose of the proposed general inquiry.

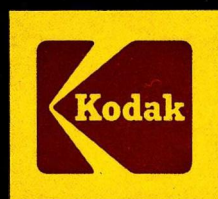
On June 29, 1976 the decision of Dr. Venturini was received. No opportunity of any kind had been given to the Association to make submissions on matters on which the Commission was not satisfied, notwithstanding the express agreement by the Commission.

## Paragraph 7

You state the MPDA "appeared to object to the fact that Dr. Venturini's examination of the clearance applications was as detailed and complete as it was". Not so. We objected to the fact that it was not nearly detailed enough. Much of Dr. Venturini's material was entirely irrelevant to the applications. It contained highly critical and erroneous conclusions concerning our agreements, business practices and dealings on which my members, in spite of an express undertaking to the contrary, had been given no opportunity of presenting submissions. It not only included many statements couched in emotional and condemnatory terms, it contained many errors of fact and of law. In denying applications which clearly favored all exhibitors and was of no benefit whatever to distributors, Dr. Venturini clearly showed his ignorance of the industry and an inability to understand the meaning of certain clauses and agreements. For example:

1. He apparently reaches the conclusion in dealing with application C3751 that the distributors follow practices which force unwanted films on exhibitors. This bizarre conclusion is arrived at in the course of considering an agreement entered into by the distributors at the request of the Queensland Exhibitors' Association and with the approval of the Theatres and Films Commission of Queensland, under which the distributors agreed to give the exhibitors additional rights





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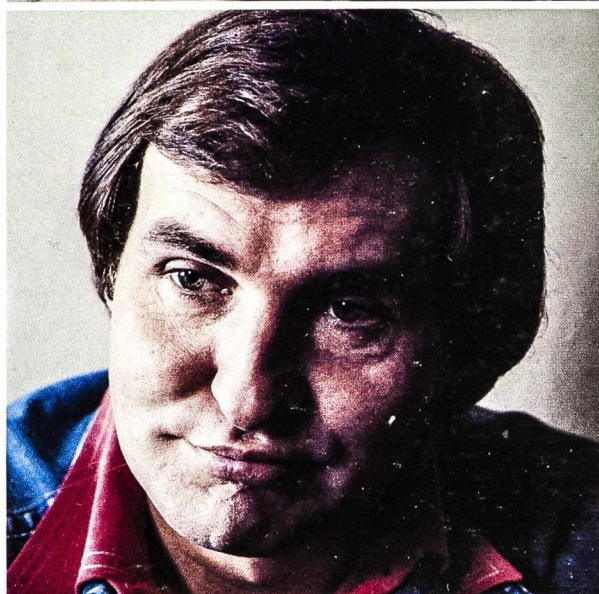
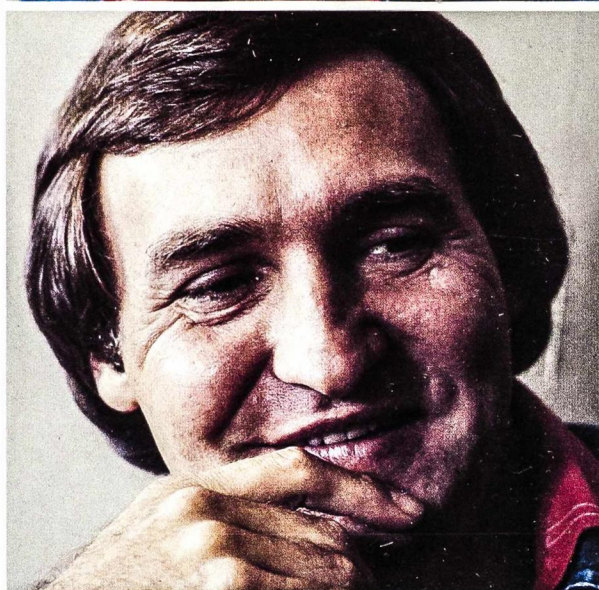
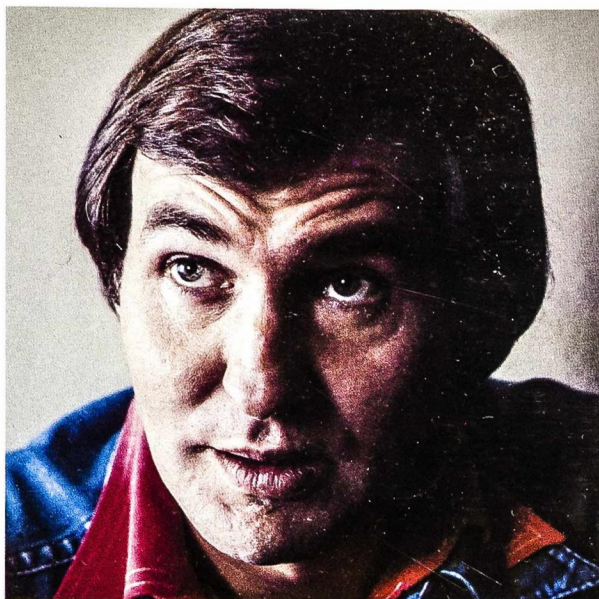


Enlarged from an act





actual 16mm newsreel frame on Kodak Ektachrome 7242 film.



## Kevin Wiggins, Melbourne Cameraman for 'A Current Affair' talks about Kodak Ektachrome film:

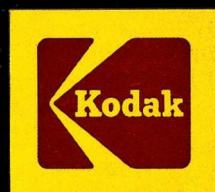
"I guess it boils down to a personal preference on my part. I like Ektachrome film because it's reliable in so many ways as far as color standards are concerned. I prefer the color that Kodak stock produces" . . . "I think it gives a truer rendition" . . . "You can stretch Ektachrome stock a fair way in forced development. I've shot with Ektachrome 7242 film under mercury-vapour street lights, pushing it three stops and getting quite amazing results. Of course, there was some color change but we did have an image on film, and when it comes to the crunch that's what's important" . . . "In this sort of work it's sometimes necessary to work in strange and very remote locations. I've ridden on camels and flown in balloons and been in many other weird vehicles and there are always a lot of problems and variables involved" . . . "So it's good to know that there's one constant that can be relied upon in these situations: Kodak color films."

**Kodak Ektachrome film gives you the true picture... always.**



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to reject films which they had contractually agreed to take.

2. In dealing with application C3752 he characterized a clause which had been adopted at the request of the exhibitors (in order to confer a concession on exhibitors in modification of their normal contractual obligations), as a clause involving coercion by the distributors. It is regrettable that under such circumstances he should use the decision as a forum to launch a bitter denunciation of the industry and air his own jaundiced views.

### Paragraph 8

The Standard Form of Contract, which formed one of the main objects of Dr. Venturini's attack, was drawn up by both exhibitors and distributors in order to standardize procedures within the industry and to facilitate the everyday transactions between the two. It has no bearing on film hire terms, titles, release dates, playing time, prices of admission, etc., which have always been a matter for discussion and negotiation between individual distributors and exhibitors. Mr Stoddard's assertion that it "has been a continuing source of frustration and business difficulty for independent exhibitors, weighted as it is heavily in favor of the distributor", has no basis in fact. It simply is not true. This form of contract is law in NSW and Queensland, and its retention is being sought by the Exhibitors' Associations in those states. In Victoria and Tasmania, where it was not a statutory document, the Chief Executive Officer of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, Mr. Jack Graham, expressed his concern, not only at the Commission's finding, but that it should reach such a decision without inviting his Association to comment on those clauses in the Contract which the Commission found objectionable. In such circumstances, the Commission's outright rejection of the adoption of the Standard Form in Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia — in the most intemperate, even vituperative, terms — is extraordinary and quite impossible to comprehend. I refer you to Mr Graham's letters of July 26 and August 5 to the Trade Practices Commission, which appeared in *The Australasian Cinema* of August 5 and 19 respectively. I quote Mr Graham (a lawyer) as follows:

"All we have to say, therefore, is that we are disgusted at the manner in which we have been treated by your Commission in this matter. Not only has that treatment been grossly unfair, but it has been contrary to the basic principles of common justice. We have been subjected to criticism in the most extravagant language by Dr. Venturini without a proper opportunity being given to us to present the true facts relating to the Victoria/Tasmania Contract. We take the strongest exception to being treated in this way."

In referring to the "payment of film hire in advance scheme", Mr Stoddard continues, "which the MPDA appropriately use to suppress the incidence of bad debtors in the industry and to inappropriately restrain bona fide negotiation and argument between distributor members and independent exhibitors." The second contention is nonsense and again betrays a lack of understanding of the clause.

### Paragraph 10

The article further states "the Commissioner issued a 92-page judgement which effectively turned the flare of the spotlight on a host of monopolistic and anti-competitive practices consistently indulged in by the MPDA". This extravagant charge is typical of many which have been levelled against my Association in recent years entirely unsupported by facts.

On the state of the film industry Dr. Venturini said: "At the same time the structure of

the industry is one which lends itself to exclusionary practices. The production of films — where it exists — is largely confined to a handful of major companies, most of which are closely integrated with distributing companies. These large producer-distributor groups have had substantial interests in cinema ownership, controlling the best cinemas in many areas."

The statement is substantially incorrect on two counts. By far the greater number of films today are produced by independents, and secondly, among my members only one of the "large producer-distributor groups" has substantial interests in cinema ownership. The other six major American companies do not, and are entirely free to market their product in a way which will maximize its profit potential. To suggest that the producer-distributor groups "cannot afford . . . the disfavor" of the large circuits again shows a failure to grasp the realities of the situation. The fact is that a general shortage of quality product rather puts the shoe on the other foot. Regardless of the opinion of Dr. Venturini and others, it is a free market.

In referring to *The Australasian Cinema's* support of the MPDA it was suggested that "many independent exhibitors, however, are of the belief that both this paper and the organization that purports to represent them are merely fronts for the vertically integrated exhibition and distribution combines that back it." The facts are that this organization comprises about 70 per cent of all independent exhibitors in NSW (the so-called "vertically integrated exhibition . . . combines" are minority members) and the editor is a man of wide experience in both distribution and exhibition who is well known for his forthright and knowledgeable views on industry matters.

### Paragraph 14

I can only say once again that there would be no local industry at all if it were not for the American product and the so-called 'combines' who had the faith, the know-how and the nerve to invest in high quality cinemas — equal to any in the world — in what has always essentially been a high risk business. Without them there would be few worthwhile cinemas for the Australian producer to obtain suitable outlets. Presumably the "prominent independent exhibitors" referred to object to the distributors giving priority in release to the "vertically integrated exhibition combines" who just happen to operate the best and most efficient cinemas in the country. Again, it is solely the right and prerogative of the distributor to choose the most suitable and lucrative outlets for his films; indeed he has an obligation to his producers to do so. It is his business and his duty to place his product to the maximum advantage, and the release pattern which has evolved over the years has done so because it has proven the most profitable to the distributor.

The Australian producer of today expects precisely the same treatment for his film, and for precisely the same reason. It would be unrealistic and illogical to expect otherwise. Furthermore, the distributors and first-run exhibitors expend a great deal of money in publicizing those films — publicity which must rub off and assist all subsequent runs in the market. Is that relationship between distributors and exhibitors one which is "sick, unhealthy and unbelievably restrictive", as Dr. Venturini would have us believe? The phrase betrays a lack of knowledge of the industry and the essential nature of its operation.

It is indeed commendable that the local distributors, GUO, Roadshow and Filmways have been instrumental in financing local production. It might well be argued that as Australian companies they have a greater obligation to do so.

But it certainly is trite to repeat the tired old bleat about the "millions of dollars exported annually from Australia by MPDA members." In fact, \$20 million was remitted last year by MPDA members, or 16 per cent of the gross national box-office; hardly an excessive profit.

The balance was retained in Australia, keeping many thousands of Australians in lucrative employment, in building new cinemas, in investment in local production, and in paying considerable taxation in various forms.

I would like to see more investment by the major American companies in Australian production, and will continue to press for it. But it is not the right of the Australian producers to demand that profits made on American films be invested in local production. It should be remembered that similar requests are being made all over the world, and American companies must not only be selective in such investments, but be convinced of some prospect of success in international markets — particularly the U.S. domestic market. So far, in spite of the local success of *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and *Caddie*, that quality has not yet been demonstrated conclusively by Australian films.

Most of the scripts I have read are far too parochial in content for me to be able to recommend in terms of international markets. This view is very forcefully supported by Terry Bourke in the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* of November 2, under the heading, "We're making too many home movies." It is simply unrealistic to expect American investment in films which cannot succeed internationally.

### Paragraph 20

Termination of the agreements concerned simply means that it is a matter for each distributor to determine individually his own form of Film Licence Agreement. It seems likely that over a period of time differences will develop between the contracts used by different distributors. Thus in practical terms it is likely to cause more inconvenience to exhibitors, who have clearly indicated their preference for a standard form of agreement.

Finally, Mr Stoddard suggested that "the Commission will be keeping an ever watchful eye on MPDA practices and that a full-scale inquiry into the exhibition-distribution industry may be in the air."

Yet another inquiry? What possible good could it achieve? Unless one accepts the premise that any enterprise (particularly foreign) which makes a profit is evil, the exercise is useless, and a waste of the taxpayer's money. What is necessary is more understanding by industry critics of the essential nature of the business and the vital role played by the major distributors and exhibitors, all of whom are co-operating in putting any Australian film of merit on Australian screens in equal opportunity with foreign films.

'Merit' is the only criterion. Quotas cannot make poor films successful at the box-office. Restrictive legislation and handouts cannot put box-office appeal into a film; indeed I believe they would retard rather than encourage the development of the Australian industry. Its future lies in becoming competitive in international markets, and that realization will be a positive step towards establishment of a permanent viable industry.

Yours faithfully,  
W. G. Loney,  
Chairman

Motion Picture Distributors' Association of Australia



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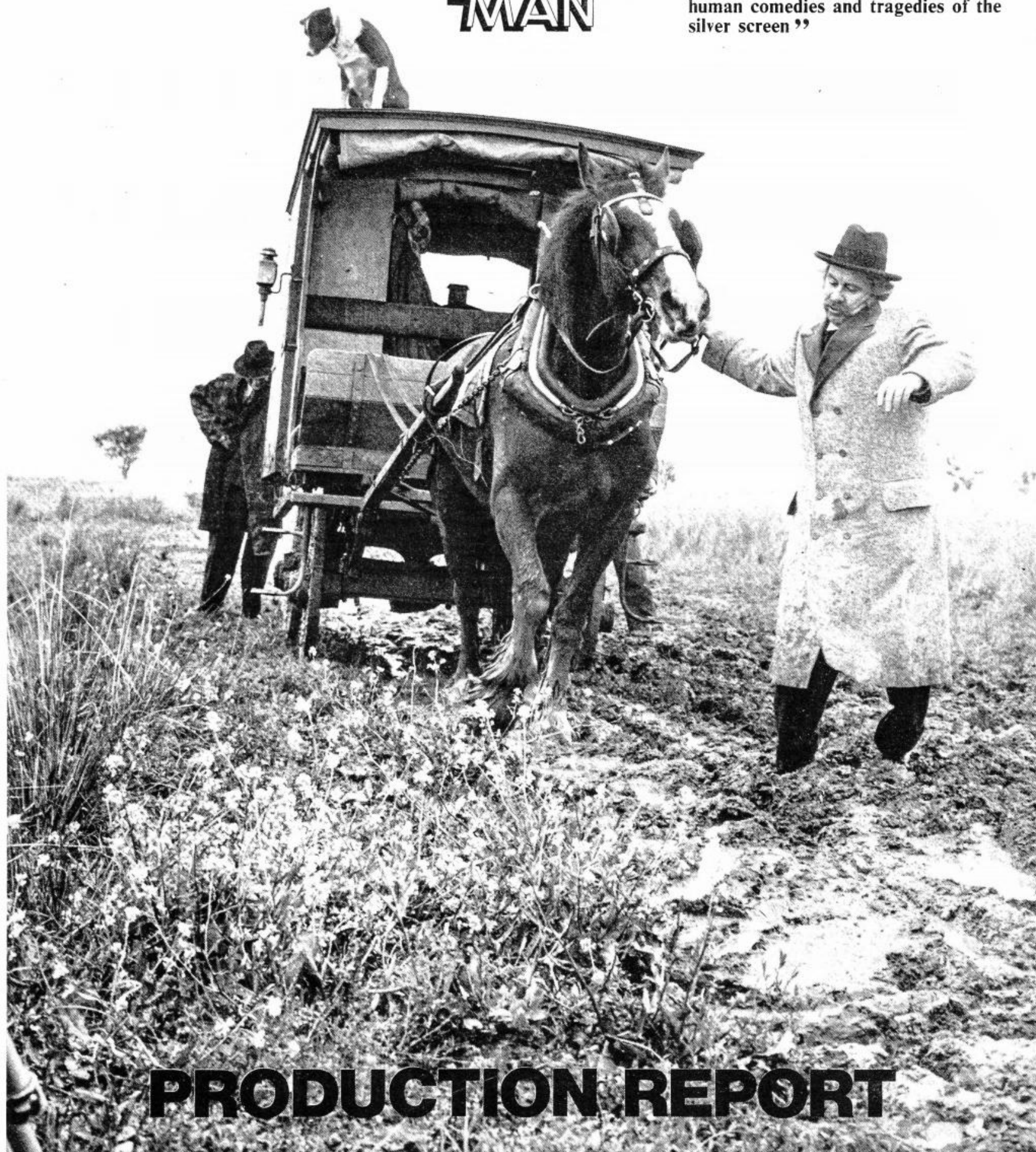
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# THE ★ PICTURE SHOW MAN

“The period is the mid-1920s to the early 1930s. The locations are the wide cloud-swept plains of New South Wales, and the green and lush north-east corner of the state.

The picture show man travels the back roads, bringing to people in the little country towns the sophistication, the excitement, the glimpses of the far-off world, the human comedies and tragedies of the silver screen”



## PRODUCTION REPORT

The following interviews with members of "The Picture Show Man" production team were recorded on location in Tamworth NSW by Antony I. Ginnane and Gordon Glenn.

# JOAN LONG

## Producer/Scriptwriter

**When was the idea for "The Picture Show Man" conceived?**

Well, in 1971 I was making a documentary about the Australian film industry in the twenties, called *The Passionate Industry*. I had sent letters to a lot of country newspapers asking for stills on film-making in the 1920s, because I had a feeling that a lot of material was tucked away in people's bottom drawers.

I got quite a good result — not so much on production, but mainly on exhibition including travelling showmen.

I later appeared on Newcastle television's *Tonight* show with a clip from *Pictures that Moved*, and a Mr Penn sent me a manuscript he had written but never published. I enjoyed it a lot and offered him a very modest sum for a two-year option — which I think was fair in the circumstances.

I explained that it would probably be about three years before I could get around to doing anything about it, and that I wasn't even sure if there was a film in it. So we let it go at that.

I went abroad and then had *Caddie* on my plate in 1974. I eventually did the first draft of *The Picture Show Man* in early 1975. But by this time *Caddie* had been got together and production started, and I had to be available right through for re-writes, conferences... It was the best experience as a writer I ever had, because I was more-or-less treated as part of the team. Usually after you have written something you are never seen again. But I had worked with both Donald and Tony before, so we all knew each other well.

When *Caddie* was over I was still unsure if there was really a feature film in *The Picture Show Man* script that I had written. So I asked Tony Buckley to read it, and he liked it. That really set me off on the path.

**At this stage did you see your role as joint writer, or also as a producer?**

I thought I would probably co-produce with somebody. I wasn't sure who. But as I became more in-

**"The Picture Show Man" is Joan Long's first feature film as producer and writer, and follows her highly praised screenplay for Anthony Buckley's "Caddie". In this interview Joan Long discusses the genesis of "The Picture Show Man"; the role of the producer and the difficulties of setting up and administering the \$600,000 production.**



involved in actually producing it, particularly raising the money, I began to see very clearly that a film is like a ship — you can only have one captain. Having co-producers on a film can be a very tricky proposition, because there is really only one person who is prepared to go through the anguish of raising the money.

**How did you go about raising the finance for "The Picture Show Man"?**

I went about it as scientifically as I could — in a logical fashion. I also used my imagination a lot. John Daniel of the Australian Film Commission said I had explored ground that no other Australian producer had gone over.

The first thing I did was the obvious: the rounds of television and film distribution companies. But they are well trodden. Next, I moved into fields of private finance and merchant banking houses. I followed up a tremendous number of leads that never came to

anything.

Eventually I got a Sydney radio station — 2UW — involved, which I don't think had been done before. I also found an independent exhibitor named Theo Goumas from Newcastle involved.

By this time *Caddie* was out, but it didn't make much difference. Then TVW of Perth came in.

**How did the NSW government involvement come about?**

Soon after the Labor government was elected in NSW, I wrote to Mr Neville Wran, but I couldn't get anywhere with him. I kept getting messages that he couldn't see me or that he was too busy.

Then John Morris from the South Australian Film Corporation contacted me to find out how the project was progressing. He offered me \$100,000 if I would make it in South Australia. He guaranteed that there would be no creative interference, but that it would have to be made in South Australia using South Australian crew and other personnel.

Well, I was prepared to go along with this offer, because it seemed the only way the film would get to be made.

But by this time another factor had crept in — the budget was going up. It had been written in December 1975 and, of course, by June 1976 everything was up 15 per cent. This made it very difficult, because even with South Australia's \$100,000 I didn't have enough money, and I still needed about \$40-50,000.

At that stage certain people were made aware that yet another NSW film was going to another state, and certain people high up in the NSW government made Mr Wran aware of it. He phoned me saying it was more than possible that they would invest in the film.

In the meantime, I had applied to the AFC to bring their investment up to 50 per cent of the new budget, and was successful. I informed Wran of this and he made an offer of \$120,000, which I accepted.

**How would you describe "The Picture Show Man"?**

It's a comedy in a genre of its own — a gentle comedy, but with quite a lot of action. I suppose it's a comedy about showbusiness people, and in a way it's also a road picture.

**I think it's now accepted that one of the reasons for the success of "Picnic at Hanging Rock" and "Caddie" is that they appeal not only to the ordinary cinemagoer, but also to a group of people who don't regularly go to the cinema. Do you see "The Picture Show Man" in this mould?**

I think so. I always write with a very thoughtful attitude towards the audience — an audience of all age groups.

I think John Meillon is giving the greatest performance of his life in this film and he has tremendous appeal to the older age group. At the same time there is also a youthful hero and heroine.

**What overseas potential do you think "Picture Show Man" has?**

Very good. In the writing I deliberately put in an overseas publicity hook in the form of roles for a British actor and an Italian actress.

For further biographical information on Joan Long, refer 'Australian Women Filmmakers Part 2' in *Cinema Papers* Sept-Oct 1976, page 138.



Patrick Cargill's name is well-known in Europe and Britain. Then we had the good luck to interest Rod Taylor, and having someone of that calibre is the dream of every Australian producer who is looking for an entry into the U.S. market.

**Does Taylor play an Australian or American in the film?**

An American. I am a bit allergic to an American wandering around in Australian films for the sake of the U.S. market, but when I saw the first lot of rushes I knew that it worked, because in the film he is an American selling films in Australia. He is a travelling film salesman and somehow it seems natural.

**One question back on the financial side: we seem to be locked into a situation in Australia where the production company receives only 25 per cent of property and the investors 75 per cent — which is not the situation in the U.S. or Britain, where a 50/50 split is common...**

Well, the only reason investors are getting away with it in Australia is because it's so tough to raise private finance.

**You don't think the AFC has set this split up and that it continues to be used because individual producers accept it — not fight it?**

Well, I think that's probably right, but producers are starting to challenge it, and I even think the Commission is planning a new split of 70/30.

**So I take it "The Picture Show Man" is on a 75/25...**

Yes, I am afraid so. What people don't realize is that the producer's 25 per cent split has to be divided between the whole creative team, including some of the actors, the director and the producer. It often ends up that a lead will get more for six weeks work than a producer who has worked solid for 18 months to two years.

**Is Taylor on a percentage in addition to his fee?**

No, just a flat fee.

**Is anyone on a percentage?**

Yes, the director, the writer of the original manuscript and a couple of the actors.

**Do you see yourself as writer, producer and director on your next project?**

Well, people seem to be more interested in pushing me into it than I am. It has crossed my mind. But I want to get the best possible result up on the screen and I don't necessarily believe I am the best person to do it. I believe that an experienced director, such as John Power, is much better equipped.



Director John Power (left) and John Meillon who plays Pop, the picture show man.



Freddie (John Ewart)



Lou (Gary McDonald)

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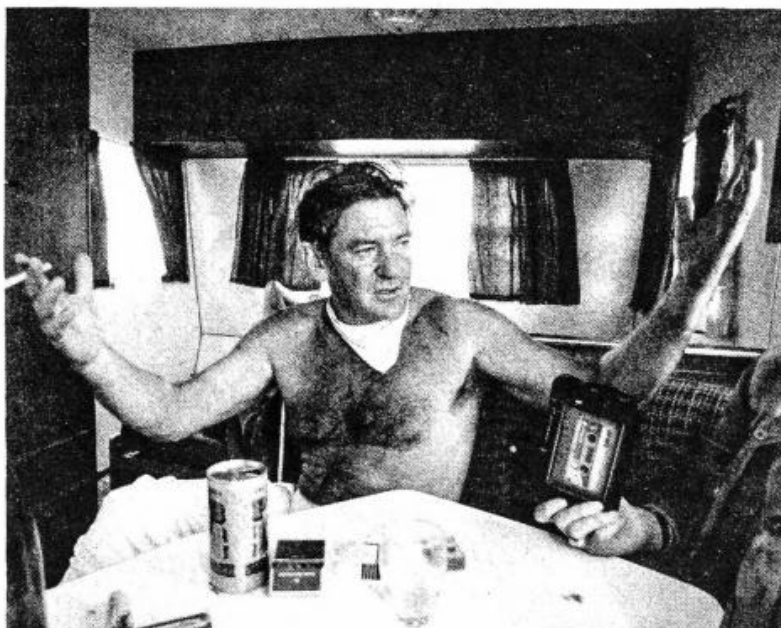
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## ROD TAYLOR

Along with Peter Finch and Errol Flynn, Rod Taylor is one of the few Australian actors to gain recognition — and full-time employment — in the international film world. Taylor's first major role was in George Stevens' "Giant" in 1956, and throughout the sixties he appeared in a number of major productions including "The Time Machine", "The Birds", "Young Cassidy", "Hotel" and "The High Commissioner". In

the seventies, Taylor has widened his scope and moved into the new fields of production and scriptwriting. As the following interview reveals, he has plans to launch a number of new projects, several to be based in Australia.

In "The Picture Show Man", Taylor makes a guest appearance as Pop's arch rival Palmer.

Joan Long indicated that you responded quickly to her invitation to appear in "The Picture Show Man". Had you been waiting for an offer to do something in Australia?

I'll tell you quite frankly. I had a script called *Banjo Creek*, written by Ted Willis, that had been re-written by some hack at Universal Studios for a production to be made in Australia. I thought the Universal version was a piece of shit, so I added some dialogue and made it good and Aussie and, I thought, funny. But unfortunately I got static from Willis about changing his script . . . me, not Universal!

Anyway I felt that I was flogging a dead horse, and knowing that there was a lot of production interest from hip guys like Neville Wran and Don Dunstan, I began to think that things could really open up out here. So when *The Picture Show Man* offer came along, I thought, well it's not the starring role, only a guest appearance, but I'll give it all the help I can. And that's why I am here. And I am proud that I am here, because I am sincere about the industry.

Before accepting "The Picture Show Man" offer I believe you had been involved in production, and to some extent, writing . . .

Yes. I had just written a script for a film called *On a Dead Man's Chest*, starring Stuart Whitman and Elke Sommer. It was directed by Henry Levin and will probably be released by United Artists.

My next film will be about the Bermuda Triangle, called *Sargossa*.



Director John Power and Rod Taylor

It's a horrifying phenomenon, a triangle of sea in which things just disappear. I was going to shoot it in Jamaica until I realized I could shoot for four days in Miami and simulate the rest of it in Australia using Australian technicians, Australian actors. I can do the whole thing down here. And that's what I intend to do.

Any other projects?

I have a Western that a man called Syd Donovan in Perth wants to talk to me about. I think he is tied up with a television station.

I think I can be a useful element in Australian projects. My name will certainly get U.S. distributors interested. They know that they can make at least a few bucks domestically on my name.

In terms of world-wide distribution they can certainly do something with my name. I feel I can be a useful cog for the local industry.

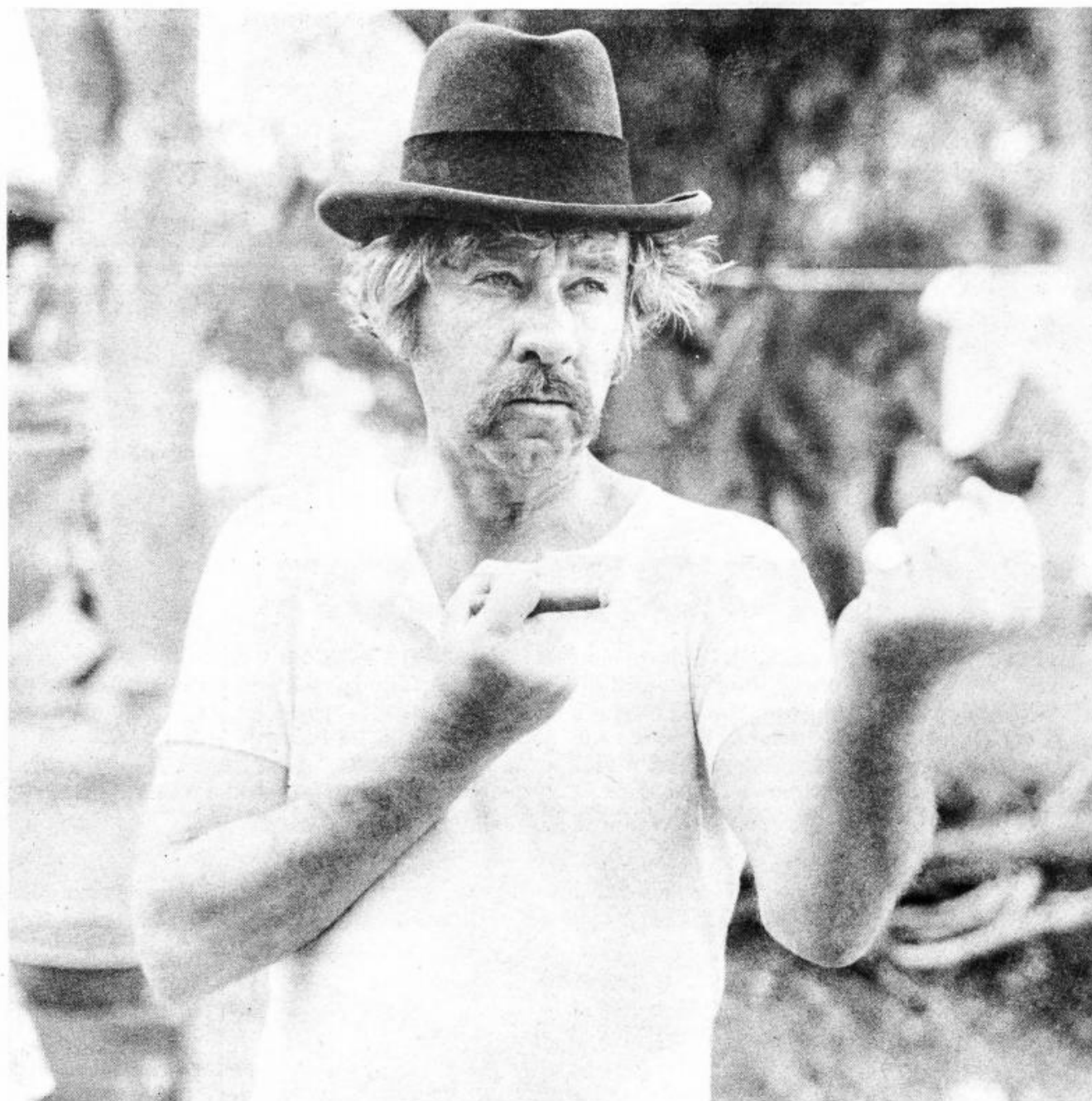
Have you taken a lower percentage in this film than normal?

You can bet your arse on that!

As far as this film goes, when I saw the crack in the door I came straight down to help. Forget the money, I am here to help.

Do you think it's really necessary for Australian films to have international names if they are to crack the world market?

Yes, I am afraid that in the beginning it is. After two years, forget it.



## JOHN MEILLON

John Meillon has made more than 20 major feature film appearances in British and Australian productions, including "On the Beach", "The Sundowner", "Billy Budd", "Walkabout" and "Wake in Fright". More recently Meillon has been a strong force in the revival of feature film production in

Australia with appearances in "The Cars that Ate Paris", "Inn of the Damned", "Side Car Racers", "Ride a Wild Pony", "The Fourth Wish" and "Harness Fever".

In "The Picture Show Man", Meillon plays the lead role of Pop, the picture show man of the title.

**What sort of part is Pop?**

Well, as you know *The Picture Show Man* is set in early thirties, and Pop travels around the countryside with a picture show van, a pile of silent movies and a pianist called Lou, played by Gary McDonald.

Lou deserts me and I pick up another pianist called Freddie, played by John Ewart.

Now Pop runs up against a man who used to be his operator but who has now set up in opposition to him — that's Palmer, played by Rod Taylor.

**Have you ever worked with John Power before?**

Yes I have. When he was making

documentaries we worked together on one called *Escape from Singapore*. But I have never worked with him on a feature before — it's his first. But I've worked with a lot of directors and I can say that John is one of the most unflappable around. He is also very perceptive, very intuitive — he knows what he wants.

**Your last film, "The Fourth Wish", was released recently. Were you disappointed by its poor box-office performance?**

I don't think its failure was just because of the film itself. I think it might have been distributed at the wrong time.

I know the Americans said it was a little too soft, but it's a film that I

really loved doing.

**What did the U.S. distributors mean by soft?**

It didn't have a good punch up or rape scene.

**Have you found a dramatic increase in the number of offers you have received to do films recently?**

Well, next year I hope to involve myself again with Galaxy — a production company I am in with Don Chaffey and Michael Craig. *The Fourth Wish* was a Galaxy/South Australian Film Corporation co-production, and I hope we will do another film together in March next year.

**You do a lot of stage and film work. Do you find any difficulty switching?**

Something you just have to learn is that when a camera is about 4 ft away you are 87 ft wide and 28 ft long on a screen. So, if you flick your eyes it becomes a huge gesture on the screen. In the theatre, people are a long way from you — the gesture has to be bigger in a certain way. Also, in theatre when the curtain goes up, that's it, nobody can call cut. You just keep going till it comes down. Films are completely different, all broken up.

I like to adapt in my own personal way. I like to do nothing or as little as possible on screen. I try to eliminate all the time.





Setting up a shot at the Tamworth racetrack. Below: Assistant director Mark Egerton positions a group of extras for John Power (left). Above: A run through for sound.



Below: Art Director David Copping. Right: Gary McDonald (centre) and Director of Photography Geoff Burton (right)



Photographs by Gordon Glenn and Mike Giddens.

# THE PICTURE SHOW MAN CAST

Character	Artist
Palmer	Rod Taylor
Pop	John Meillon
Freddie	John Ewart
Larry	Harold Hopkins
Fitzwilliam	Patrick Cargill
Madame Cavalli	Yelena Zigon
Lou	Gary McDonald
Lucy	Sally Conabere
Miss Lockhart	Judy Morris
Major Lockhart	Don Crosby
Mrs Summers	Dolore Whiteman
Mrs Duncan	Jeannie Drynan
Policeman	Tony Barry
Open Air Hall	
Secretary	Gerry Duggan
Bookie 1	Ernie Bourne
Elderly man	Willie Fennell
Stunts	Grant Page

## CREW

Producer	Joan Long
Director	John Power
Screenplay	Joan Long
Director of Photography	Geoff Burton
Art Director	David Copping
Production Manager	Sue Milliken
Unit Manager	Betty Barnard
Production Secretary	Jenny Tosolini
First Asst. Director	Mark Egerton
Second Asst. Director	Mark Turnbull
Third Asst. Director	Steve Andrews
Continuity	Jan Tyrrell
Production Accountant	Vivian Falloon
Asst. Accountant	Lynn Barker
Camera Operator	Bill Grimmond
Focus Puller	David Burr
Clapper Loader	Jan Kenny
Sound Recordist	Ken Hammond
Boom Operator	Julian McSweeney
Costume Designer	Judy Dorsman
Stand-by Wardrobe	Mandy Smith
Make Up	Peggy Carter
Hairdresser	Jenny Brown
Key Grip	Ross Erickson
Assistant Grip	Graham Litchfield
Gaffer	Tony Tegg
Best Boy	Allan Dunstan
Electrics 1/Genny Op.	Simon Purkin
Stills	Mike Giddens
Property Buyer	
Set Dresser	Graham Walker
Stand-by Props	
Property Master	Ken James
Asst. to Art Director	Chris Webster
Art Department	Robyn Coombs
Construction Manager	Ray Brown
Stand-by Carpenter	Graham Hallett
Editor	Nick Beauman
Asst. Editor	Ted Otten
Dubbing Editor	Greg Bell
Location Casting	Sandra McKenzie
Music	Peter Best
Unit Runner	Ralph Story
Horse Master	Heath Harris
Dog Trainer	Ray Winslade
Caterers	John and Lisa Faithfull
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In the next issue of *Cinema Papers*, Gordon Glenn and Antony I. Ginnane interview John Power, the director of "The Picture Show Man", as part of a special feature on Australian directors.

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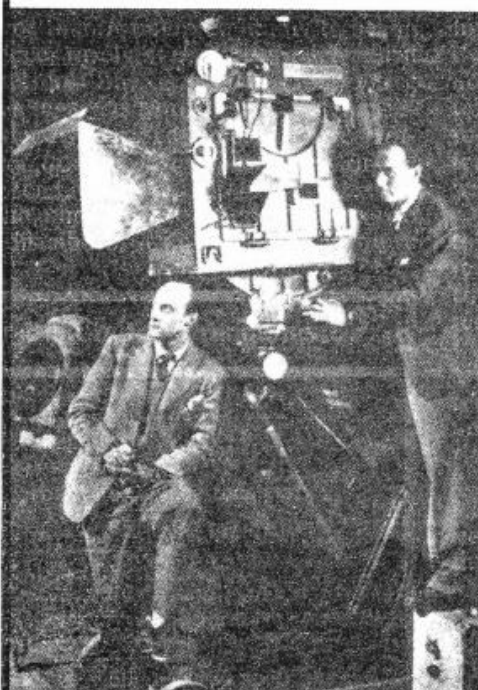
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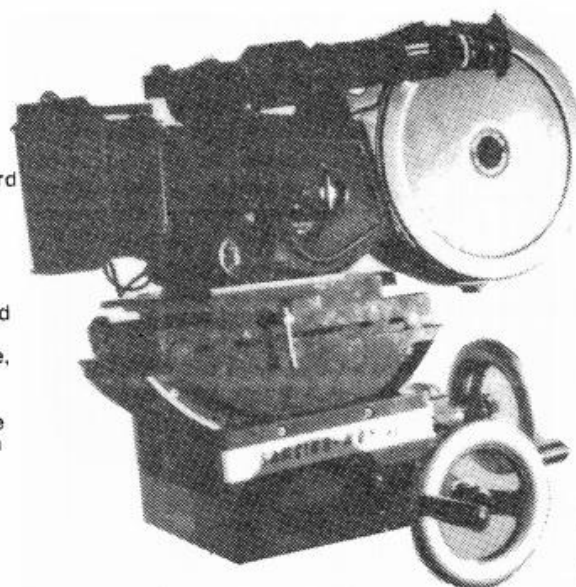


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Jack Cardiff and Geoffrey Unsworth with the Technicolor 3 strip camera on a 22" Moy head.



The Arriflex BL35 camera on a Samcine-Moy 13" geared head.

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# GEOFF BURTON

## Director of Photography

**What sort of look are you aiming for with "The Picture Show Man"? Anything unusual?**

There is nothing about the look of the film that hasn't been achieved before. But the basic visual idea is that it should be fairly gentle in terms of contrast and color. Not pretty or lyrical, but gentle.

Generally, the film is a comedy, but the guys in it have been through some pretty tough times, so we want a rugged look to it. It may seem to be a contradiction — washing out colors and still going for harshness — but it does seem to work.

**How exactly are you achieving this?**

Well, we are not using clear lenses at all. We are using Fogs quite a lot, and over-exposing, especially in the first part of the film. That does have the effect of making the colors soft. Mind you, we are talking about camera color; it can change once we start doing a bit of additive printing.

**Was this outlook towards the look of the film worked on closely between you and John Power?**

John and I have worked together a lot before, and it has been normal practice to spend quite a long time working up to a film. We look at different sorts of material, and usually by the time we start there is a pretty clear idea on exactly how we are going to shoot it.

I think one film that has influenced us is *Missouri Breaks* where Penn used subtle, very gentle colors.

**One way to achieve that look is to use light flare across the lens to soften color. Is that the way you are doing it?**

Yes, very much. The first week of rain has really helped by giving us those nice white skies which people stand into and become soft around the edges. Our style has now changed somewhat with all the sunshine.

**You are shooting with Kodak 5247 stock. Do you find any trouble over-exposing it?**

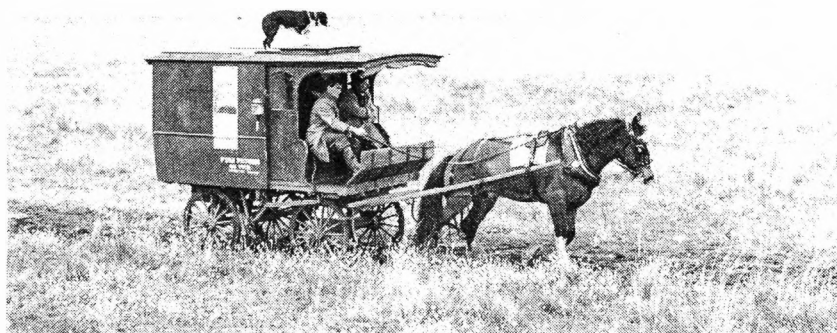
It does desaturate with over-exposure, as any negative does. But with 47 you can't go as far in any of these effects as you would like to at times — or as you could with the old 5254. When I talk about over-exposure I mean only a ½ stop. With 54 you could comfortably go further if you really wanted to.

Of course the whole problem with 47 seems to be the incon-

Like many of Australia's leading cameramen, Geoff Burton's early years were spent at the ABC where he worked on a wide range of documentaries, shorts, series and features. His credits there include episodes of the "Chequerboard" series, episodes of "Ben Hall" and a number of documentaries with "The Picture Show Man" director John Power, including the award-winning "Escape from Singapore" and "They Don't Clap Losers". At the ABC, Burton also worked with documentary maker Tom Haydon on several projects including the BBC-ABC co-production "The Long, Long Walkabout". "Sunday Too Far Away" was Burton's first feature credit, followed by "The Fourth Wish", "Harness Fever" and "Storm Boy".



Geoff Burton checks a light level on John Meillon.



The Picture Show Man moves on: Capturing the harshness of the dry plains country of western NSW.

sistency through a curve. You have to be pretty accurate and strict about the degree of over-exposure.

**Are you implying that you can't print it correctly if you are more than ½ a stop out?**

No, it's correctable if you want it to be. What I mean by inconsistency is that the colors will desaturate if you over-expose by more than ½ a stop. The characteristic change is accelerated and you lose colors very drastically.

So once you move off a full exposure on 47 you really have to be careful.

**You mentioned that the look of "The Picture Show Man" changes as the film progresses. Could you elaborate?**

Well, it begins in the plains country of western NSW, and it's meant to be dry and brown — and not very pleasant to live in.

Then they change areas and move to the river country around

Grafton. Once we get there I intend to change the look and make the colors stronger, more saturated — which will require more 'correct' exposure.

**Presumably it will be greener, lushier . . .**

Yes, which helps. There are fields of sugar-cane, poplar forests and rich river banks. If the weather is kind to us and we get blue skies and sunshine, it will be a lot easier to convey the contrast between the two areas.

**Has there been any attempt to recreate an historically accurate imagery of early Australia by, for example, studying early paintings?**

Not with this film. I can't think of any painter's style in any of the visuals we are chasing here — or even similar actually.

It's an interesting exercise to explore how to give a film a 'period' look. There are techniques like using sepia, but I have the feeling that audiences are more sophisticated than we realize. I think there are other, more subtle ways of achieving period.

**Were you party to the decision to shoot in widescreen as opposed to anamorphic?**

Well I was involved briefly. During most of the pre-production I was in Korea shooting another film, so I missed out on quite a lot of the early discussions.

My own feeling — which Joan and John know — is that I am not keen on anamorphic. I like the widescreen (1.85:1) format, which I find more pleasant to work with and far more pleasurable to look at.

**Is that because of the framing?**

Well, not composition and framing so much — I just find it more watchable. It's a personal preference. I do think anamorphic has a role — I am not totally opposed to it — but you lose some of the intimacy of wide-screen.

Although there's a lot of grandeur in this film, it is also a very intimate story. There are beautiful little interchanges in confined areas. The first projection box sequence we did the other day was shot in a 10 by 10 room with two big machines and sound projectors linked-up with all sorts of strange apparatus.

The room was full of bits and pieces, lit with one little bare light and our two heroes were right in the middle. Anamorphic in there would have been a disaster. I would have had nightmares for weeks. ★



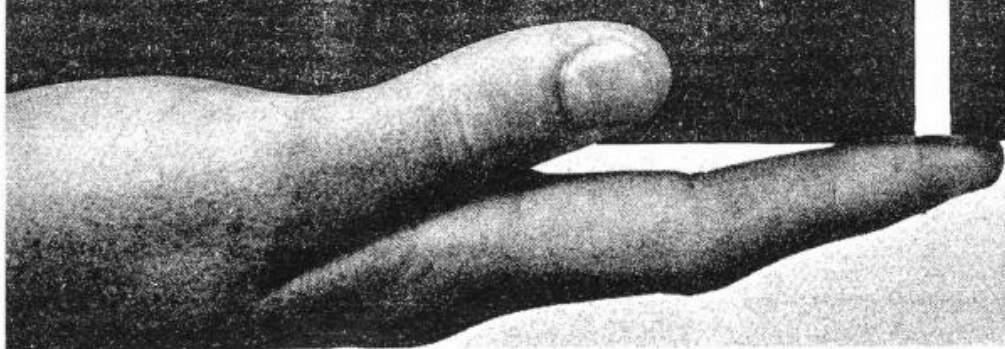
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# PRODUCTION SURVEY

## 35mm PRE-PRODUCTION

### BEST EACH WAY

Production Company ..... Andrew Vial Film Productions Pty Ltd  
 Director ..... Andrew Vial  
 Screenplay ..... Andrew Vial  
 Producer ..... Ann Folland  
 Length ..... 10 min  
 Progress ..... Pre-production  
**Synopsis:** The deflowering of a myth — a history of Australian sport interwoven in a fictional way with the growing tendency for Australians to opt toward spectatorship.

### BODY COUNT

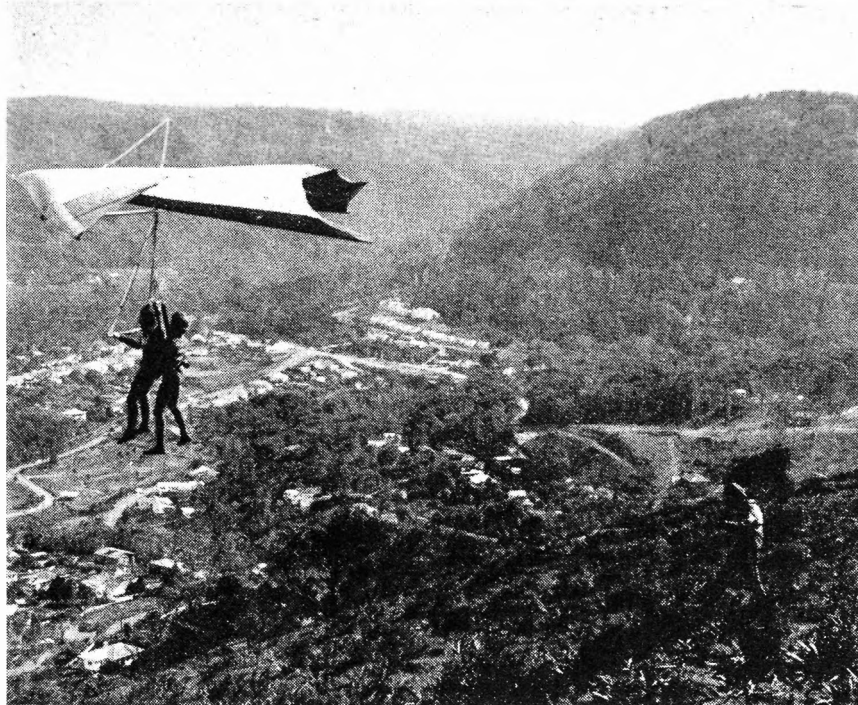
Production Company ..... Australian International Film Corporation  
 Distribution Company ..... Filmways  
 Director ..... Ross Dimsey  
 Screenplay ..... Forrest Redlich, Ross Dimsey  
 Based on the novel *Reservation Cowboys* by Forrest Redlich  
 Producer ..... Antony I. Ginnane  
 Executive Producer ..... Leon Gorr  
 Associate Producers ..... Robert F. Ward, Mark Jossem  
 Editor ..... Tony Patterson  
 Budget ..... \$200,000  
 Length ..... 105 min  
 Gauge ..... 35mm Todd A-O  
 Color Process ..... Metrocolor  
 Progress ..... Shooting Late Feb. 1977  
 Release Date ..... September 1977  
**Synopsis:** An unscrupulous sergeant in a small Victorian town sets out to frame a war veteran for the murder of the town's homosexual, who was in fact killed by the sergeant himself. The ex-G.I. teams up with a pair of misfits from the city and then all mayhem breaks out as they take on the local police force as well as Army units sent in to hunt them down in the bush.

### CROCODILE

Production Company ..... Jenbur Films presents a Samurai Production  
 Director ..... Terry Bourke  
 Screenplay and Story ..... Terry Bourke  
 Producer ..... Terry Bourke  
 Executive Producers ..... James G. Jenner (Jenbur), Des Dawson (Samurai)  
 Associate Producer ..... Patrick Clayton  
 Music ..... Bob Young  
 Photography ..... Brian Probyn  
 Underwater Photography ..... Ron and Valerie Taylor  
 Art Director ..... Barry Adler  
 Production Secretary ..... Penelope Wells  
 Special Photographic Effects ..... Toei Studios (Tokyo)  
 Continuity ..... Margaret-Rose Dunphy  
 Still Photography ..... Chic Stringer  
 Technical Adviser ..... Dr Graham Webb  
 Make-up ..... Deryck de Niese, Rena Hoffmann  
 Scenic Artist ..... Walter Stackpool  
 Stunts ..... Peter Armstrong, Frank Lennon, Herb Nelson  
 Titles ..... Walter Stackpool  
 Budget ..... \$1.6 million  
 Length ..... 120 min  
 Progress ..... Pre-production  
**Cast:** U.S. and British leads (to be signed). Australian cast includes: Michael Craig, Joseph Furst, Cornelia Francis, Gordon MacDougall, Jewell Blanch, Rowena Wallace, Alfred Sandor, Robert Quilter, Keith Lee, Gus Mercurio, Tom Richards, Reg Gorman, Roger Ward, Kit Taylor, Lionel Long, Terry Camilleri, Dennis Miller, Sandra Lee-Paterson, Barry Eaton, Mark Edwards, Sandy Harbutt, Jay Paul, Phil Avalon, Tom Oliver, John Nash, Barry Barkla, Ken Goodlet, Mark Hashfield, Peter Thompson, Alan Cassell and introducing Lois Cook.  
**Synopsis:** A 20-foot rogue crocodile terrorizes an outback town in far Northern Australia. Shooting on location in Chillagoe, Cairns and Brisbane begins on May 16, 1977.

### THE FLAME STONE

Production Company ..... Roger Whittaker Films  
 Director ..... Roger Whittaker  
 Screenplay ..... Ted Roberts  
 Story ..... Roger Whittaker  
 Budget ..... \$400,000  
 Length ..... 110 min  
 Progress ..... First draft script  
**Synopsis:** Action adventure story about a veteran miner and a young city man who team up to search for opals in Coober Pedy.



Brian Trenchard Smith's *Deathcheaters*.

### THE IRISHMAN

(Working Title)

Production Company ..... Forest Home Films Pty Ltd  
 Director ..... Donald Crombie  
 Screenplay ..... Donald Crombie  
 Based on the Novel by ..... Elizabeth O'Connor  
 Producer ..... Anthony Buckley  
 Photography ..... Peter James  
 Production Manager ..... Ross Matthews  
 Production Designer ..... Owen Williams  
 Costume Design ..... Judith Dorsman  
 Budget ..... \$600,000  
 Length ..... Feature  
 Progress ..... Shooting April 1977  
**Cast:** To be announced.  
**Synopsis:** An Irish-Australian teamster loses his livelihood when the first motor lorry comes to a small Queensland gulf town in 1922. The film is concerned with the conflict between the teamster, the trucker and the way this affects the teamster's family relationship.

### LASSETER'S REEF

Production Company ..... Triangle Features  
 Screenplay ..... Sonia Borg, Howard Griffiths  
 Producer ..... Russ Karel  
 Budget ..... \$400,000  
 Length ..... Feature  
 Progress ..... Pre-production  
**Synopsis:** An adventure story, set in 1930, about an expedition which Lasseter arranged to find his fabulous reef of gold.

### THE LAST WAVE

Director ..... Peter Weir  
 Screenplay ..... Peter Weir, Tony Morphet  
 Producers ..... Jim and Hal McElroy  
 Photography ..... Russell Boyd  
 Editor ..... Max Lemon  
 Production Manager ..... Ross Matthews  
 Art Director ..... Neil Angwin  
 Production Designer ..... Goran Warff  
 Costumes/Wardrobe ..... Annie Bleakely  
 Sound Recordist ..... Don Connolly  
 Camera Operator ..... John Seale  
 Gaffer ..... Tony Tegg  
 Make-up ..... Jose Perez  
 Special Effects ..... Monte Fleguth  
 Length ..... 100 min  
 Gauge ..... 35mm Wide Screen  
 Progress ..... Pre-production  
 Release Date ..... Spring 1977  
**Cast and Synopsis** not yet available.

## 35mm IN PRODUCTION

### DEATHCHEATERS

Production Company ..... Deathcheaters Pty Ltd  
 Distribution Company ..... Roadshow Film Distributors  
 Director ..... Brian Trenchard-Smith  
 Screenplay ..... Michael Cove  
 Story ..... Brian Trenchard-Smith  
 Producer ..... Brian Trenchard-Smith  
 Executive Producer ..... Richard Brennan  
 Associate Producer ..... John Fitzgerald  
 Music ..... Bob Hughes  
 Photography ..... John Seale  
 Editor ..... Ron Williams  
 Production Managers ..... Betty Barnard, Lyn McEncroe  
 Art Director ..... Alan McKenzie  
 Production Designer ..... Darrell Lass  
 Production Co-ordinators ..... Betty Barnard, Bronwyn Brostoff  
 Music Director ..... Bob Hughes  
 Wardrobe ..... Jenny Campbell  
 Sound Recordist ..... Ken Hammond  
 Mixer ..... Peter Fenton  
 Sound Editor ..... Tomash Pokorny  
 Assistant Directors ..... Lyn McEncroe, Chris Maudson, Steve Andrews  
 Lighting ..... Derek Jones, Allan Dunstan  
 Boom Operator ..... Julian McSweeney  
 Clapper/Loader ..... David Brostoff  
 Gaffer ..... Derek Jones  
 Continuity ..... Jenny Quigley  
 Second Unit Photography ..... David Williamson  
 Chief Grip ..... Merv McLaughlan  
 Props Buyer ..... John Carroll  
 Standby Props ..... Bruce Barber  
 Stunt Co-ordinator ..... Grant Page  
 Still Photography ..... David Williamson  
 Make-up ..... Jill Porter  
 Carpenter ..... John Deuton  
 Stunts ..... Grant Page  
 Production Accountant ..... Marie Brown  
 Catering ..... John and Lisa Faithful  
 Titles ..... David Dunnean  
 Budget ..... \$150,000  
 Length ..... 90 min  
 Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
 Post Production ..... Film Production Services  
 Progress ..... In Production  
**Cast:** John Hargreaves, Grant Page, Margaret Gerard, Judith Woodroffe, Ralph Cotterell, Drew Forsythe, John Krummel, Brian Trenchard-Smith, Max Aspin, David Brooks, Michael Atkins, Roger Ward, Wallas Eaton, Peter Collingwood, Chris Hayward, Reg Evans, Vincent Ball, Anne Semler.  
**Synopsis:** Steve and Rod are professional stuntmen. They are involved in an increasingly bizarre series of incidents which culminate in their being invigiled into raiding the Philippine-based stronghold of a criminal mastermind.

## THE FJ HOLDEN

Production Company ..... FJ Films Ltd  
 Distribution Company ..... GUO Film Distributors Pty. Ltd.  
 Director ..... Michael Thornhill  
 Screenplay ..... Terry Larsen  
 Producer ..... Michael Thornhill  
 Associate Producers ..... Jenny Woods, Errol Sullivan  
 Photography ..... David Gribble  
 Editor ..... Max Lemon  
 Production Manager ..... Jenny Woods  
 Art Directors ..... Lissa Coote, Monte Fleguth  
 Unit Manager ..... Pom Oliver  
 Sound Recordist ..... Don Connolly  
 Mixer ..... Peter Fenton  
 Sound Editor ..... Sara Bennet  
 Assistant Directors ..... Errol Sullivan, Keith Heygate, Steve Connard  
 Camera Operator ..... Frank Hammond  
 Focus Puller ..... Paul Murphy  
 Boom Operator ..... Chris Goldsmith  
 Gaffer ..... Brian Bangrove  
 Continuity ..... Jo Weeks  
 Grip ..... Noel McDonald  
 Assistant Editor ..... Hugh Piper  
 Still Photography ..... John Delacour  
 Best Boy ..... Paul Gantner  
 Make-up ..... Deryck de Niese  
 Length ..... 90 min  
 Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
 Progress ..... In Production  
**Cast:** Paul Couzens, Carl Stever, Eva Dickinson, Garry Waddell, Colin Yarwood.  
**Synopsis:** Unavailable.

## THE GETTING OF WISDOM

Production Company ..... Southern Cross Film Productions  
 Director ..... Bruce Beresford  
 Producer ..... Phillip Adams  
 Photography ..... Don McAlpine  
 Editor ..... Bill Anderson  
 Production Manager ..... Russell Karel  
 Producer's Assistant ..... Moya Icton  
 Production Accountant ..... Lyn Barker  
 Production Secretary ..... Julie Hocking  
 Production Designer ..... John Stoddart  
 Costumes ..... Anna Senior  
 Sound Recordist ..... Desmond Bone  
 Assistant Directors ..... Michael Lake, Tolvo Lember, John Hipwell  
 Camera Operator ..... Gale Tattersall  
 Camera Assistant ..... Peter Sykes  
 Boom Operator ..... Mark Wasitak  
 Clapper/Loader ..... Denis Nikolic  
 Gaffer ..... Robert Young  
 Continuity ..... Moya Icton  
 Key Grip ..... Joel Witherden  
 Standby Props ..... Nick Hepworth  
 Props Buyer ..... Mark Rochford  
 Still Photography ..... George Miller  
 Hairdresser ..... Anne Pospischil  
 Best Boy ..... Peter Maloney  
 Make-up ..... Deryck de Niese  
 Assistant Designer ..... Richard Kent  
 Catering ..... Anna Barker  
 Budget ..... \$500,000  
 Length ..... 100 min  
 Progress ..... Shooting January 1977  
**Cast:** Patricia Kennedy, Candy Raymond, Jan Friedel, Monica Maughan, Dorothy Bradley, Diana Greentree, Julia Blake, Noni Hazelhurst, Margot McLennan, Gerda Nicholson, Terence Donovan, Stephen Oldfield, John Waters, Celia de Burgh, Julia Blake, Sigrid Thornton.  
**Synopsis:** Based on the novel by Henry Handel Richardson.

## THE GHOSTS OF YERRENDERIE

Director ..... John Tsambazis  
 Screenplay ..... Wayne Harrison, Ron Wilson  
 Producer ..... John Tsambazis  
 Associate Producer ..... Frank Soldatos  
 Photography ..... John Tsambazis  
 Editor ..... Jim Haron  
 Sound Recordist ..... John O'Connell  
 Production Assistants ..... Valerie Lhuede, Frank Zammit, George Soldatos  
 Facilities ..... Supreme Films P/L  
 Budget ..... \$26,000  
 Length ..... 20 min.  
 Color Process ..... Ektachrome 5241  
 Progress ..... In Production  
**Synopsis:** A capricious force, thought to be caused by the Ghosts of Yerrenderie, bring new life to what was once a ghost town. The film reveals this force with some interesting, informative material.

# PRODUCTION SURVEY

## HIGH ROLL

Production Company... Hexagon Productions Pty Ltd  
Distribution Company... Roadshow Distributors Pty Ltd  
Director... Igor Auzins  
Screenplay... Forrest Redlich  
Producer... Tim Burstall  
Associate Producer... Alan Finney  
Assistant to Producer... Christine Sull  
Photography... Dan Burstall  
Editor... Edward McQueen-Mason  
Production Manager... Tom Binns  
Art Director... Leslie Binns  
Costumes/Wardrobe... Kevin Reagan  
Sound Recordist... Barry Brown  
Mixer... Peter Fenton  
Assistant Directors... Tom Burstall, James Parker  
Camera Operator... Dan Burstall  
Focus Puller... Ivan Hextor  
Boom Operator... Mark Waslutak  
Clapper/Loader... Grant Fenn  
Gaffer... Stewart Sorby  
Continuity... Gilda Barrachi  
Grip... David Cassar  
Stunt Co-ordinator... Errol Archibald  
Assistant Editor... Peter Burgess  
Choreography... Kevin Reagan  
Hairdresser... Terry Worth  
Best Boy... Ian Dewhurst  
Make-up... Terry Worth  
Special Effects... Lachlan Wilson  
Stunts... Grant Page  
Budget... \$350,000  
Length... 100 min.  
Progress... Shooting  
Release Date... May/June 1977

**Cast:** Joseph Bottoms, Grigor Taylor, Judy Davis, Wendy Hughes, Sandy McGregor, Gus Mercurio, John Clayton, Robert Hewitt, Roger Ward, Christine Amor, Katie Morgan.

**Synopsis:** *High Roll* is the story of two young men enjoying a *Butch Cassidy* and the *Sundance Kid* type of relationship. It follows their adventures from a North Queensland country town to the bright lights and excitement of Surfers Paradise.

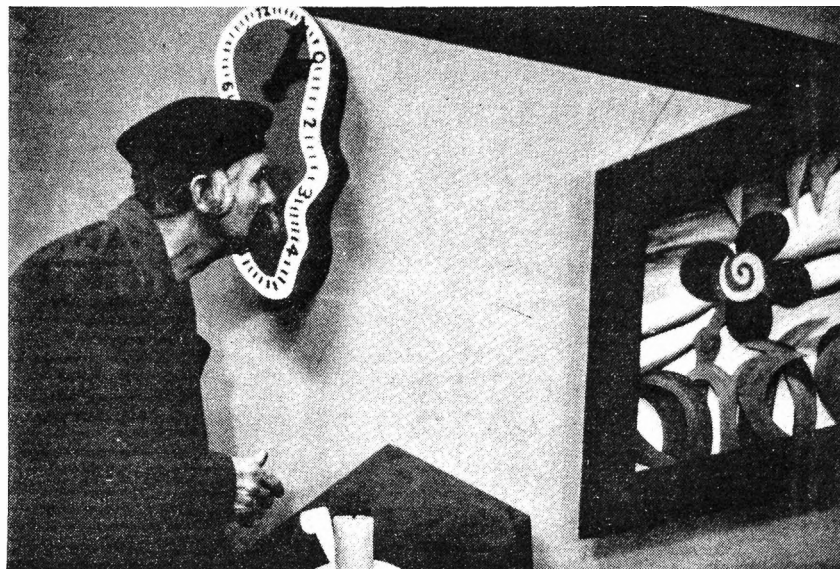
## JOURNEY AMONG WOMEN

Production Company... KoAn Film Productions  
Distribution Company... Regent  
Director... Tom Cowan  
Screenplay... Dorothy Hewett, John Welley, Tom Cowan  
Story... Tom Cowan  
Producer... John Welley  
Executive Producer... John Welley  
Photography... Tom Cowan  
Editor... John Welley  
Costumes/Wardrobe... Norma Moriceau  
Sound Recordist... Jeff Doring  
Mixer... Peter Fenton  
Sound Editor... Kit Guyatt  
Assistant Director... Adam Salzer  
Camera Assistant... Jenny Thornley  
Gaffer... Brian Bangsrove  
Sound Re-recordist... Laurie Fitzgerald  
Set Decorator... Sally Campbell  
Grip... Jim Godsell  
Assistant Editor... Hugh Piper  
Script Assistant... Leslie Tucker  
Buscraft... Merv Lilley  
Special Effects... Lachlan Wilson  
Stunts... Heath Harris  
Titles... Harry Williamson  
Budget... \$90,000  
Length... 102 min  
Color Process... Eastmancolor  
Progress... Fine-Cutting  
Release Date... Easter 1977  
**Cast:** Lillian Crombie, June Pritchard, Martin Phelan, Rose Lilley, Diane Fuller, Neil (Little Nell) Campbell, Lisa Peers, Jude Kuring, Kay Self, Robyn Moase, Tim Elliot, Kenneth Laird, Ralph Cotterell.

**Synopsis:** A group of incorrigible convict women escape into the wilderness taking with them the judge advocate's daughter. Set in a British penal colony in 1792.

## MY BEST TIME

Production Company... Australian International Film Corporation  
Distribution Company... Filmways  
Director... Richard Franklin  
Screenplay... Ross Dimsey  
Producer... Antony I. Ginnane  
Executive Producer... Leon Gorr  
Editor... Tony Patterson  
Budget... \$70,000  
Length... 90 min



Michael Hudson's *Angel*.

Color Process... Metrocolor  
Progress... Shooting December 1976  
Release Date... May 1977  
**Synopsis:** Ten girls at a college re-union talk about their most exciting sexual experience.

## THE PICTURE SHOW MAN

See Production Report, pages 243-51.

## SUMMER CITY

Production Company... Avalon Films  
Director... Christopher Fraser  
Screenplay... Phillip Avalon  
Research... Jann Harris  
Producer... Phillip Avalon  
Associate Producer... Fontana Films  
Music... Festival  
Photography... Jaroslav Marek  
Editor... Alan Trott  
Art Director... Jann Harris  
Location Co-ordinator... A. Mascord  
Wardrobe... Karen Vaughan-Williams  
Sound Recordist... Bill Pitt  
Assistant Director... Michael Carlton  
Camera Operator... Jaroslav Marek  
Lighting... Peter Stadler  
Lighting Technician... Patrick Cranney  
Camera Assistant... Peter Stadler  
Clapper/Loader... Alex Watson  
Continuity... Christina Mackay  
Grip... Paul Nevil  
Still Photography... L. Slutskin  
Script Editor... Christopher Fraser  
Hair Design... Rosa Miano  
Make-up... Bronwyn Jones  
Graphic Artist... Phil Mortlock  
Runner... John Edman  
Production Accountant... Karmen Doran  
Casting Consultant... Mitch Mathews  
Caterer... E. Bevan  
Length... 90 min  
Progress... Shooting  
Release Date... February 1977  
**Cast:** John Jarrat, Phil Avalon, Mel Gibson, Steve Bizley, James Elliott, Debbie Forman, Judith Woodroffe, Bruce Cole, Nick Canny.  
**Synopsis:** A period psycho-drama, set in a small coastal town.

## 35mm AWAITING RELEASE

### BARNEY

Production Company... D. S. Waddington Productions P/L  
Distribution Company... Columbia Pictures International  
Director... David Waddington  
Screenplay... Colin Drake  
Producers... David Waddington, John Williams  
Executive Producer... Michael Tarant  
Music... Tommy Tycho  
Photography... Richard Wallace  
Editor... Rod Hay  
Production Manager... Les White  
Production Secretary... Cara Farnes  
Costumes... Carol Berry  
Sound Recordist... Ken Hammond  
Mixer... Phil Judd  
Sound Editor... Rod Hay

Assistant Directors... Chris Maudson, Michael Carlton  
Camera Operator... Ross Nichols  
Focus Puller... David Burr  
Boom Operator... David Cooper  
Clapper/Loader... David Brostoff  
Gaffer... Alan Walker  
Continuity... Therese O'Leary  
Second Unit Photography... Ross Nichols  
Set Decorator... Ray Frost  
Grip... Grahame Mardell  
Second Unit Director... David Waddington  
Stunt Co-ordinator... Larry McGarry  
Assistant Editor... Lachlan Duncan  
Props... Neil Matthews  
Still Photography... Jeff Nield  
Production Accountant... Clare Priest  
Hairdresser... Cheryl Cowdroy  
Best Boy... George Harrington  
Make-up... Josie Knowland  
Runner... Mike Atkinson  
Budget... \$224,000  
Length... 93 min.  
Progress... Awaiting Release  
**Cast:** Brett Maxworthy, Sean Kramer, Lionel Long, Spike Milligan, Jack Allen, Robert Quilter, Shirley Cameron, Jackie Rees, Rob Steele, Danny Adcock, Mike Preston, Terry Redell, Jim Clifford, Ron Ratcliff, Judy Connelli, Herbie Nelson, Al Thomas, Larry McGarry, Andy Clark, Jerry Thomas, Dieter Chidei, Alex Pope, Bodie Leigh, Colin Peterson, Grahame Ware, Desmond Mangan.  
**Synopsis:** Family adventure story set in Australia in the 1800s which tells of the travels and adventure of a 12-year-old boy shipwrecked off the Australian coast.

## 35 mm IN RELEASE

### BREAK OF DAY

Production Company... Clare Beach Films  
Distribution Company... GUO Film Distributors Pty Ltd  
Director... Ken Hannam  
Screenplay... Cliff Green  
Producer... Patricia Lovell  
Associate Producers... Cliff Green, Geoff Burton  
Music... George Dreyfus  
Photography... Russell Boyd  
Editor... Max Lemon  
Production Manager... Pom Oliver  
Production Designer... Wendy Dickson  
Production Secretary... Jenny Tosolini  
Sound Recordist... Don Connolly  
Mixer... Peter Fenton  
Sound Editor... Greg Bell  
Assistant Directors... Mark Egerton, Mark Turnbull, Steve Andrews  
Camera Operator... John Seale  
Lighting... Brian Bangsrove  
Boom Operator... David Cooper  
Continuity... Lyn McEncroe  
Chief Grip... Ross Erikson  
Assistant Editor... Peter Fletcher  
Still Photography... Ian Potter  
Make-up... Deryck de Niese  
Runner... Hugh Piper  
Titles... Adrian Rolph

Budget... \$507,000  
Length... 97 min  
Color Process... Eastman 5247  
Progress... In Release  
**Cast:** Sara Kestelman, Andrew McFarlane, Ingrid Mason, John Bell, Tony Barry, Ben Gabriel, Denis Olsen, Geraldine Turner.  
**Synopsis:** A love story set in a Victorian country town in 1920. It begins in 1915 with the Australian Forces in Gallipoli.

## DON'S PARTY

Production Company... Southern Cross Film Productions  
Director... Bruce Beresford  
Screenplay... David Williamson  
Producer... Phillip Adams  
Associate Producer... David Burrows  
Photography... Don McAlpine  
Editor... Bill Anderson  
Production Secretary... Bronwyn Brostoff  
Wardrobe... Anna Senior  
Sound Recordist... Des Bone  
Assistant Directors... Mike Martorana, Tovia Lember  
Camera Operator... Gale Tattersall  
Focus Puller... Peter Moss  
Clapper/Loader... David Brostoff  
Gaffer... Allan Martin  
Continuity... Moya Icceton  
Assistant Sound Recordist... Graham Irwin  
Key Grip... David Petley  
Assistant Grip... Neil Matthews  
Standby Props... Robert Hill  
Assistant Editor... Andrew Stewart  
Still Photography... Michael Giddens  
Make-up and Hair... Judy Lovell  
Assistant Electricians... Simon Perton  
Runner/Third Grip... Linda Blagg  
Casting Director... Allison Barrett  
Budget... \$300,000  
Color Process... Eastmancolor  
Progress... In Release  
**Cast:** John Hargreaves, Jeanie Drynan, Graeme Blundell, Veronica Lang, Ray Barrett, Pat Bishop, Graham Kennedy, Kit Taylor, Candy Raymond, Harold Hopkins, Claire Binney.  
**Synopsis:** Adapted from David Williamson's play of the same name.

## ELIZA FRASER

Production Company... Hexagon  
Distribution Company... Roadshow  
Director... Tim Burstall  
Screenplay... David Williamson  
Producer... Tim Burstall  
Associate Producer... Alan Finney  
Music... Bruce Smeaton  
Photography... Robin Copping  
Editor... Edward McQueen-Mason  
Production Managers... Michael Lake, Michael Midlam  
Art Director... Leslie Binns  
Unit Manager... John Chase  
Production Co-ordinator... Christine Sull  
Production Secretary... Barbara Taylor  
Wardrobe Co-ordinator... Patricia Forster  
Wardrobe Master... Kevin Regan  
Wardrobe Assistant... Darrelyn Gunzberg  
Sound Recordist... Desmond Bone  
Mixer... Peter Fenton  
Assistant Directors... Michael Lake, Tom Burstall, John Hipwell  
Camera Operator... Dan Burstall  
Focus Puller... Peter Sykes  
Boom Operator... Mark Waslutak  
Clapper/Loader... Grant Fenn  
Gaffer... Stewart Sorby  
Continuity... Jan Tyrrell  
Key Grip... Joel Witherden  
Assistant Grip... David Cassar  
Set Construction... Jeurgien Helwig  
Standby Props... John Powlitch  
Props Buyers... James Parker, Margaret Monk, Peter Kendall  
Assistant Editor... Peter Burgess  
Dubbing Editor... Sarah Bennett  
Still Photography... Suzy Wood  
Hairdresser... Annie Pospichil  
Best Boy... Lindsay Foote  
Make-up... Lois Hohenfels  
Assistant Make-up... Viv Mepharm  
Special Effects... Graham Matherick  
Electrician... Ian Dewhurst  
Runner... John Pruzanski  
Production Administrator... Robert Kirby  
Production Accountant... Phillip Corr  
Secretary Administration Yvonne Schotowsky  
Budget... \$1.5 million  
Length... Feature  
Progress... In Release  
Release Date... 16 December 1976  
**Cast:** Susannah York, John Waters, John Castle, Trevor Howard, Noel Ferrier, Martin Harris,



# PRODUCTION SURVEY

Abigail, Gus Mercurio, George Mallaby, Lindsay Roughsey, Bruce Spence, Gerard Kennedy, Charles Tingwell, Sean Scully, Serge Lazareff.

## STORM BOY

Production Company ..... S.A.F.C.  
Distribution Company ..... S.A.F.C.  
Director ..... Henri Safran  
Screenplay ..... Sonia Borg  
Story ..... Colin Theile  
Producer ..... Matt Carroll  
Associate Producer ..... Jane Scott  
Music ..... Michael Carlos  
Photography ..... Geoff Burton  
Editor ..... G. Turney Smith  
Location Manager ..... Beverly Davidson  
Art Director ..... David Copping  
Production Secretary ..... Barbara Ring  
Make-up/Wardrobe ..... Helen Dyson  
Lighting ..... Tony Tegg  
Sound Recordist ..... Ken Hammond  
Mixer ..... Peter Fenton  
Sound Editor ..... Bob Cooper  
Assistant Directors ..... Ian Goddard,  
Ian Jamieson,  
Ian Allen

Camera Operator ..... Ross Nichols  
Focus Puller ..... David Burr  
Boom Operator ..... Julian McSweeney  
Clapper/Loader ..... Erika Addis  
Continuity ..... Moya Icton  
Chief Grip ..... David Petley  
Grip Assistants ..... Phil Warner,  
Michael White,  
Bill Connolly

Assistant Editors ..... Viano Jacksa,  
Kerry Regan

Still Photography ..... David Kynoch  
Technical Advisor ..... Grant Page  
Best Boy ..... Allan Dunstan  
Electrician ..... Keith Johnson  
Buyer/Dresser ..... Neil Angwin  
Standby Props Master ..... Ken James  
Construction Manager ..... Herbert Pinter  
Accountant ..... Bill Altman  
Catering ..... Anna-Mary Catering  
Pelican Trainer ..... Gordon Noble  
Dialogue Coach ..... Michael Caulfield  
Runner ..... Scott Hicks  
Budget ..... \$300,000  
Length ..... 87 min  
Progress ..... In Release

**Cast:** Peter Cummins, Greg Rowe, David Gulpilli.

**Synopsis:** A young man and his father, who live in an isolated coastal wilderness known as "The Coorang", rescue and raise a young pelican. The bird changes the relationships between father and son and their futures.

## SUMMER OF SECRETS

Production Company ..... Secret Picture  
Productions  
Distribution Company ..... BEF  
Director ..... Jim Sharman  
Screenplay ..... John Altken  
Producer ..... Michael Thornhill  
Music ..... Cameron Allen  
Photography ..... Russell Boyd  
Editor ..... Sara Bennett  
Production Manager ..... Ross Matthews  
Art Director ..... Jane Norris  
Production Co-ordinator ..... Jenny Woods  
Wardrobe Designer ..... Kristen Fredrikson  
Wardrobe Master ..... Bruce Finlayson  
Sound Recordist ..... Ken Hammond  
Assistant Directors ..... Errol Sullivan,  
Mark Turnbull,  
Keith Keygate

Focus Puller ..... Peter Moss  
Boom Operator ..... David Cooper  
Gaffer ..... Brian Bangsrove  
Continuity ..... Gilda Barachi  
Sound Re-recordist ..... Peter Fenton  
Grip ..... Georgie Dryden  
Assistant Grip ..... Phil Warner  
Props Buyer ..... Lissa Coote  
Standby Props ..... Monte Fleguth  
Assistant Editor ..... Helen Brown  
Dubbing Editor ..... Greg Bell  
Choreography ..... Christine Koltai  
Design Consultants ..... Michael Ramsden,  
Stuart McDonald

Research ..... Sally Campbell  
Best Boy ..... Paul Gantner  
Make-up ..... Liz Michie  
Construction Manager ..... Ray Brocus  
Assistant Electronics ..... Ian Plummer  
Budget ..... \$350,000  
Length ..... 100 min.  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... In Release  
**Cast:** Arthur Dignam, Rufus Collins, Neil Campbell, Andrew Campbell, Kate Fitzpatrick.

**Synopsis:** *Summer of Secrets* is about people and their memories. It is about the interaction of four people from totally different backgrounds and their effect on each other, and told within a framework that evokes the unusual, the mysterious and the completely unexpected.

## ANIMATED FILMS

### DOT AND THE KANGAROO

Production Company ..... Yoram Gross  
Film Studios Pty Ltd  
Directors ..... Yoram Gross,  
Sandra Gross  
Screenplay ..... John Palmer,  
Yoram Gross  
Producer ..... Yoram Gross  
Executive Producer ..... Yoram Gross  
Associate Producer ..... Sandra Gross  
Music ..... Bob Young  
Photography ..... Graham Sharpe  
Editor ..... Yoram Gross  
Production Manager ..... Sue Field  
Art Director ..... Sandra Gross  
Production Designer ..... Sandra Gross  
Production Co-ordinator ..... Jenny Schowe  
Second Unit Photography ..... Frank Hammond  
Chief Animator ..... Laurie Sharpe  
Animators ..... Sue Beak,  
Richard Jones,  
Wal Logue,  
Athol Henry,  
Cam Ford

Budget ..... \$200,000  
Length ..... 70 min  
Gauge ..... 35 mm  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... In Production  
Release Date ..... March 1977  
**Cast:** Character's Voices: Spike Milligan, June Salter, Sue Walker, Ross Higgins, Peter Whiteford, George Assang, Barbara Frawley, Joan Bruce, Ron Haddrick, Richard Meikle, Ann Haddy, Robina Baird, Noel Brophy, Peter Gwynne.

**Synopsis:** Dot, the little daughter of a settler in an isolated part of the Australian outback, becomes lost in the bush one day. She is befriended by a big female red kangaroo who wants to help her find her way home. Dot travels in the kangaroo's pouch and has many adventures including meeting various interesting characters amongst the bush animals and birds — Koala, Platypus, Kookaburra and others. With the help of the bush creatures, Dot is finally restored to the safety of her home and the kangaroo returns to the wild.

### SCOOBY DOO

Production Company ..... Hanna-Barbera Pty Ltd  
Distribution Company ..... Hanna-Barbera Pty Ltd  
Animation Director ..... Chris Cuddington  
Executive Producers ..... W. Hanna,  
J. Barbera

Production Manager ..... Peter Jennings  
Layout ..... Steve Lumley,  
Joe Shearer  
Animation ..... Sue Beak,  
Geoff Collins,  
Warwick Gilbert,  
Sebastian Hurpia,  
Don McKinnon,  
Jean Tych,  
Gerry Grabner,  
Cynthia Leech,  
Paul McAdam,  
Di Rudder,  
Greg Ingram,  
Gairden Cooke

Assistant Animation Supervisor ..... Paul Maron  
Backgrounds ..... Richard Zaloudek,  
Milan Zahorsky  
Animation Checking ..... Narelle Nixon  
Xerox Manager ..... Ellen Bayley  
Painting Supervisor ..... Narelle Derrick  
Budget ..... \$102,000  
Length ..... 52 min  
Gauge ..... 35 mm  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... In Production  
Release Date ..... February 1977

**Synopsis:** Scooby Doo is a giant-sized great dane, not too brave, not too bright and very lovable. Together with his four teenage friends they make up Mystery Inc., who seek out thrilling suspense-filled adventures where the end result is broad comedy with more laughs than chills and more fun than fear.



Yoram Gross' *Dot and the Kangaroo*.

### MASTER OF THE WORLD

Production Company ..... Air Programs  
International Pty. Ltd.  
Director ..... Lelf Gram  
Screenplay ..... John Palmer  
Producer ..... Walter J. Hucker  
Music ..... Richard Bowden  
Animators ..... Irena Slapczynski,  
Peter Luschwitz,  
Susan Beak,  
Louis Garcia  
Layouts ..... Richard Slapczynski  
Backgrounds ..... Peter Connell  
Camera ..... Jenny Ochse,  
Dave McCullough  
Editor ..... Eddy Graham  
Painting ..... Jenny Schowe  
Transfers ..... Jeanette Toms  
Progress ..... In Release  
**Voices:** John Ewart, Tim Elliot, Mathew O'Sullivan, Ron Haddrick, Judy Morris.  
**Synopsis:** Based on the story by Jules Verne.

For details of the following 35mm films see the previous issue:

**The Electric Candle  
Sparks**

**The Living Goddess  
Fantasm**

**The Fourth Wish  
Nuts, Bolts and Bedroom Springs**

**Oz  
Mad Dog Morgan  
Harness Fever**

## 16mm PRODUCTION SURVEY

### ANGEL

Director ..... Michael Hudson  
Screenplay and Story ..... Michael Hudson  
Producer ..... Michael Hudson  
Photography ..... Don Willis  
Editors ..... Michael Hudson,  
Pat Lewis

Production Aid ..... Don Willis,  
Lyn Adcock,  
Fiona McLean,  
Mark Laidler,  
Diana Duimovich,  
Craig Hare,  
Otello Stolfo,  
Laurie Peterson,  
David Coventry

Sound Recordists ..... Chris Draffin,  
Jeanie Briant  
Effects Photography ..... Michael Hudson  
Choreography ..... Jillian Fitzgerald,  
Ludi Kerstovitch

Design and Graphics ..... Michael Hudson

Budget ..... \$6000  
Length ..... 30min  
Color Process ..... Ektachrome  
Progress ..... Release Print  
**Cast:** James Fitch, Peter Green, Darius Perkins, Jodi Greenwood, Ludi Kerstovitch, Mike Hudson.

**Synopsis:** A film for children and adults who dream. It is about an old man, his memories, his fantasies and the transformation that occurs to his world. It is peopled by strange creatures and objects — a stovepipe man, a birdman, a bike that sprouts wings — all set in surreal surroundings.

### CUBA: TODO BA BIEN

Production Company ..... Esta Bien  
Productions  
Director ..... David Hay  
Producer ..... Mike Richards  
Photography ..... Elliot Davis  
Production Co-ordinator ..... Larry Janss  
Sound Recordist ..... Michie Gleason  
Budget ..... \$40,000  
Length ..... 120 min  
Progress ..... Pre-Production  
**Synopsis:** Documentary on three Cuban families and their interaction with the Cuban Revolutionary Society.

### DRIFT AWAY

Production Companies ..... Drift Away  
Productions  
Morning Star Productions  
Distribution Company ..... Morning Star  
Productions

Director ..... Richard Bradley  
Story Concept ..... Richard Bradley,  
Austin Levy,  
Candy Raymond

Producer ..... Richard Bradley  
Associate Producer ..... Austin Levy  
Music ..... Chicago Atlantic Record Co.  
Photography ..... Richard Bradley,  
Mike Kings,  
Paul Witzig,  
Steve Mason

Editor and Opticals ..... Richard Bradley  
Music Director ..... Peter Hood  
Sound Recordists ..... Jim Bursan,  
Colin Abrahams

Mixer ..... Les McKenzie  
Sound Editor ..... Alan Trott  
Camera Assistants ..... Larry O'Shea,  
Derek Catterall

Boom Operator ..... Peter Stoner  
Key Grip ..... Clive Minton  
Props ..... Chris Smith  
Make-up ..... Joan Mostin,  
Bronwyn Jones

Drawings ..... Eddie Van Der Madder,  
Hal Holman  
Slides ..... David Smith,  
Bruce Lloyd

Surfing Animation ..... Phillip Meatchem  
(courtesy Film Graphics)

Production Facilities ..... APA Leisuretime  
Budget ..... \$68,000  
Length ..... 75 min.  
Progress ..... In Release

Release Date ..... 14 December 1976  
(Sydney Opera House)

**Cast:** Robert Ellis, Terry Colliet, Pattie Dugan, Olivia Salvador, Candy Raymond, Michelle Faudon, Lynette Curran, Roslyn Richards, Katie Hudson, David Calcott, Alan Trott.

**Synopsis:** An optical surfing spectacular about the power of the sea, personified as a woman, to mould the minds and destinies of men. A fluid fantasy about the ocean aimed at the general market, with an emphasis on music, special effects and animation.

### FLOATING — THISTIME

Distribution Company ..... Cassette Television  
Australia  
Director ..... Michael Edols  
Music ..... Mowanjumi Community  
Photography ..... Michael Edols

Editors ..... Esben Storm,  
Les McLaren  
Sound Recordist ..... Max Henser  
Assistant Director ..... Les McLaren

Length ..... 75 min.  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... In Release

**Synopsis:** The film shows the reality of daily life on an aboriginal mission; the result of changes imposed on the indigenous people by 200 years of white civilization of Australia.

# FILM SETS

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## Performing Arts Year Book of Australia

A collation of all productions  
during the previous year in  
Australia in Television,  
Film and Theatre.

**Variety Directory**

Every known professional Variety  
Act and light entertainment  
performer is listed in  
this directory.

CONTACT DIANA  
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FOR SINGLE OR  
MULTIPLE  
SUBSCRIPTIONS  
SHOWCAST  
PUBLICATIONS

Containing several thousand entries, this  
book is an up-to-date and comprehen-  
sive directory of all aspects of the  
industry.

Names, photographs, contacts and  
details of nearly all Australian  
professional actors and  
actresses.

**SHOWCAST**

**contacts & facilities**



# PRODUCTION SURVEY



Michael Dillon's *People of Everest*.

## JEREMY AND TEAPOT

Director ..... briann  
Production ..... Digby Stewart  
Screenplay ..... briann  
Music ..... Stephen Dunstan  
Photography ..... Matt Flanagan,  
Cy Lawson  
Editor ..... Michael Balson  
Scenic Design ..... Ned McCann  
Wardrobe ..... Beryl Larkin,  
Chrissie Oliver  
Sound Recordist ..... Kevin Kearney  
Assistant Director ..... Jack Thompson  
Camera Assistant ..... David Bracks  
Continuity ..... Martin Simpson  
Script Assistant ..... Bunkie  
Make-up ..... Irene Walls  
Artist ..... Martin Sharp  
Lyricist ..... John Darling  
Singers ..... Kris McQuade,  
Jessica Douglas,  
The Nicholson St. School  
Length ..... 25 min

Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... Awaiting Release  
**Cast:** Patrick Thompson, Brian Syron, Jack Thompson, Bunkie, Ann McCann, Beverly Thompson, Leona King, Peter Drury, Irene Walls, John Darling.  
**Synopsis:** The film is about a country boy (Jeremy) who creates an imaginary friend (Teapot) and takes him to worlds like invisibility and sound.

## LALAI — DREAMTIME

Distribution Company ... Cassette Television  
Australia  
Director ..... Michael Edols  
Story (as told by) ..... Sam Woolagoodjah  
Photography ..... Michael Edols  
Editors ..... Esben Storm,  
Les McLaren  
Sound Recordist ..... Max Henser  
Assistant Director ..... Les McLaren  
Length ..... 57 min.  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... In Release  
**Synopsis:** Lalai (Worora language for Dreamtime) takes the audience into pre-settled Australia to show a myth from the spiritual tradition of the people.

## THE LAST TASMANIAN

Production Company, Artis Film Productions, in association with Tasmanian Dept. of Film Production and Societe Francaise de Production  
Distribution Company Artis Film Productions  
Director ..... Tom Haydon  
Screenplay ..... Tom Haydon,  
Rhys Jones  
Producer ..... Tom Haydon  
Associate Producer ..... Ray Barnes  
Photography ..... Geoff Burton  
Production Co-ordinator ..... Helen Banks  
Production Secretary ..... Adrienne Elliott  
Sound Recordists ..... Peter McKinley,  
Frank McIvor  
Camera Operator ..... Gert Kirchner  
Camera Assistant ..... Russell Galloway  
Grip ..... Gary Clements  
Length ..... 60 min  
Color Process ..... Eastman 7247  
Progress ..... Pre-production,  
Shooting March-April 1977

## Corrections

John Heyer's *The Reef* edited by Paul Maxwell.

To Shoot a Mad Dog. Produced by David Ellick; Photography by P. Viskovich; Edited by N. Beauman.

**Cast:** Anthropologist Dr Rhys Jones, supported by past and present natives of Tasmania, with some French and English appearances.  
**Synopsis:** The extermination of the Tasmanian aboriginals is the only case in recent times of a genocide so swift and total. A search to rediscover these unique people.

## THE LEGEND OF YOWIE

Production Company ..... Dead-Set Films  
Director ..... Gerry Tacovsky  
Screenplay ..... Gerry Tacovsky  
Associate Producers ..... Colin McHugh,  
Gerry Tacovsky  
Photography ..... Michael Donnelly  
Lighting ..... Stephen Murphy  
Editor ..... Colin McHugh  
Set Designer ..... Peter Oakman  
Length ..... 45 min  
Progress ..... Shooting Jan. 1977  
**Synopsis:** Yowie attacks a railroad camp in the desert in 1877.

## LEVI STRAUSS STORY

Production Company ..... Voyager Films  
Director ..... David Ellick  
Screenplay ..... David Ellick  
Producer ..... David Ellick  
Executive Producer ..... Mal Kirk  
Production Manager ..... Albie Thoms  
Costumes/Wardrobe ..... Susan Bowden  
Camera Operators ..... Edwin Scragg,  
Oscar Schule  
Animator ..... Garry Jackson  
Budget ..... \$18,000  
Length ..... 12 min  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... In Release  
Release Date ..... 15 December 1976  
**Cast:** Jenny Kee, Louise De Telega, Josh

For details of the following 16mm films see the previous issue:

*Aliens Amongst Us*  
*Come Into My Parlour, Said the Spider...*  
*Flake White*  
*Garden Jungle*  
*Grafcom Two*  
*The Idyle*  
*Mind*  
*Murcheson Creek*  
*Music Films*  
*Now You See Me, Now You Don't*  
*Prisoners*  
*The Olive Tree*  
*The Reef*  
*Soft Soap*  
*To Shoot a Mad Dog*

Harmon, Michael Ramsden, Tony Edwards, Don Dunstan, Peter Kingston.

**Synopsis:** The history of the invention of jeans and the current manufacturing process.

## PEOPLE OF EVEREST

Director ..... Michael Dillon  
Producer ..... Michael Dillon  
Photography ..... Michael Dillon  
Editor ..... Barry Fawcett  
Production Assistant ..... Dawa Norbu Sherpa  
Sound Recordist ..... Russell Brown  
Length ..... 18 min  
Color Process ..... Eastman 7247  
Progress ..... In Release  
**Synopsis:** A winter's day in the life of the Sherpa people of the Mt. Everest region in Nepal.

## SHADOW SISTER

Production Company ..... Cinetel Productions Pty. Ltd.  
Distribution Company ..... Cinetel Productions Pty. Ltd.  
Director ..... Frank Heilmans  
Screenplay ..... Jenny Nussinov  
Producer ..... Frank Heilmans  
Executive Producer ..... Frank Heilmans  
Photography ..... Geoff Burton  
Editor ..... Frank Heilmans  
Sound Recordist ..... Robert Wells  
Mixer ..... Peter Fenton  
Camera Operators ..... Geoff Burton,  
Mischa Nussinov  
Continuity ..... Jenny Nussinov  
Sound Re-recordist ..... Robert Wells  
Still Photography ..... Frank Heilmans  
Titles ..... Peter Luschwitz  
Budget ..... \$29,500  
Length ..... 50 min  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... Shooting  
Release Date ..... February 1977  
**Cast:** Kath Walker.  
**Synopsis:** This is a documentary film on the life and work of famous aboriginal poet Kath Walker. Most of the film is being shot at Moongalba, Kath's home at Stradbroke Island. The film will reveal Kath's intimate link with the things that surround her and her love of the aboriginal people whose cause she has supported for many years.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FILM CORPORATION

## ADULT LITERACY

Distribution Company ..... S.A.F.C.  
Screenplay ..... Peter Welch  
Executive Producer ..... Malcolm Smith  
Progress ..... Scripting  
Sponsor ..... Dept. of Further Education  
**Synopsis:** A film aimed at the general public showing how the Department of Further Education is working in this field at present.

## AS WE TALK WE LEARN

Production Company ..... Slater Sound Studios  
Distribution Company ..... S.A.F.C.  
Director ..... Brian Bergin  
Screenplay ..... Russell Porter  
Executive Producer ..... Malcolm Smith  
Photography ..... Gus Howard  
Editor ..... Kerry Regan  
Production Manager ..... Nick Cockram  
Camera Assistant ..... Geoff Simpson  
Sound Recordist ..... Rod Pascoe  
Sponsor ..... S.A. Education Department  
**Synopsis:** To stimulate teacher discussion and awareness of language practice within the classroom.

## BLIND

Distribution ..... S.A.F.C.  
Executive Producer ..... Malcolm Smith  
Progress ..... Scripting  
Sponsor Royal Society for the Blind S.A. Inc.  
**Synopsis:** A film about the Royal Society for the Blind.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

Production Company ..... Newfilms Pty. Ltd.  
Distribution Company ..... S.A.F.C.  
Director ..... Justin Milne  
Screenplay ..... Ron Saunders  
Executive Producer ..... Malcolm Smith  
Editor ..... Justin Milne  
Production Manager ..... Luci Clark  
Sound Recordist ..... Soundtrack Australia  
Camera Operator ..... Geoff Simpson  
Camera Assistant ..... David Foreman  
Grip ..... Dennis Hastie  
Length ..... 20 min

## PRODUCERS, DIRECTORS and PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Include your next project in our production survey listings. Send your production details and stills to:

Production Survey  
Cinema Papers  
143 Therry St.,  
Melbourne, 3000  
Phone: (03) 329 5983

Deadline for next issue is early February.

# PRODUCTION SURVEY

Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... Shooting  
Sponsor ..... Schools Commission  
Inservice Committee

**Synopsis:** Aimed at teachers and parents to sell the concept of the importance of the integration of subject areas and ages (10-14 years) in the schools.

## PERCEPTUAL HANDICAP

Distribution Company ..... S.A.F.C.  
Screenplay ..... Ron Saunders  
Executive Producer ..... Malcolm Smith  
Progress ..... Scripting  
Sponsor ..... S.A. Dept. of Education  
**Synopsis:** A film showing teachers some of the causes of learning difficulties.

## PLAY

Distribution Company ..... S.A.F.C.  
Screenplay ..... Peter Clark  
Executive Producer ..... Malcolm Smith  
Progress ..... Scripting  
Sponsor ..... S.A. Education Department  
**Synopsis:** A film aimed at teachers which shows the value of children's play.

## TREATING PEOPLE AS PEOPLE

Production Company ..... Newfilms Pty. Ltd.  
Distribution Company ..... S.A.F.C.  
Director ..... Justin Milne  
Screenplay ..... Brian Bergin  
Executive Producer ..... Malcolm Smith  
Editor ..... Justin Milne  
Production Manager ..... Geoff Simpson  
Sound Recordist ..... Soundtrack Australia  
Mixer ..... Soundtrack Australia  
Sound Editor ..... Soundtrack Australia  
Camera Operator ..... Geoff Simpson  
Continuity ..... Suzanne Beal  
Grip ..... Trevor Ellis  
Narrator ..... Brian Bergin  
Length ..... 24 min  
Color Process ..... Ektachrome  
Progress ..... Editing  
**Synopsis:** Presenting the present philosophy of the Education Department that the neighbourhood school should be for as many of the children of the neighbourhood as possible.

## WHO KNOWS?

Production Company ..... Bosisto Productions  
Distribution Company ..... S.A.F.C.  
Director ..... Eric A. Fullilove  
Screenplay ..... Andrew Miles  
Pat Hudson  
Producer ..... John Dick  
Executive Producer ..... Peter Dimond  
Photography ..... Brian Bosisto  
Editor ..... Brian Bosisto  
Sound Recordist ..... Don Connolly  
Length ..... 24 min  
**Cast:** Bill Charlton, Frank Gallacher, John Clayton, Rob George.  
**Synopsis:** This is a training film for prison officers. It does not offer solutions or a set of rules for dealing with problems prison officers may encounter. The intention is to make prison officers aware of the possible reasons for a prisoner's action by showing examples of behavioural motivation.

## FILM AUSTRALIA

### ARMY BALCOMBE

Production Company ..... Film Australia, Camfilm  
Director ..... David E. Barrow  
Screenplay ..... David E. Barrow  
Producer ..... Peter Johnson  
Photography ..... David Blakely  
Editor ..... Alan Lake  
Production Manager ..... John Bowen  
Sound Recordist ..... Robert Wells  
Mixer ..... Peter Fenton  
Camera Assistant ..... Keith Bryant  
Electrician ..... John Morton  
Length ..... 10 min.  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... Editing  
Release Date ..... March 1977  
**Synopsis:** A recruiting film for apprentices for the Australian Army.

### DO I HAVE TO KILL MY CHILD?

Production Company ..... C.I.D./Film Australia  
Director ..... Donald Crombie  
Screenplay ..... Anne Deveson, Donald Crombie  
Producers ..... Janet Isaac, Timothy Read  
Executive Producer ..... Anne Deveson

Photography ..... Dean Semler  
Art Director ..... Owen Williams  
Editor ..... Anthony Buckley  
Costumes/Wardrobe ..... Su Doring  
Sound Recordist ..... Robert Hayes  
Mixer ..... Julian Ellingworth  
Assistant Director ..... Gerry Letts  
Camera Assistant ..... Lee Chittick  
Continuity ..... Adrienne Read  
Grip ..... Noel McDonald  
Make-up ..... Peggy Carter  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Negative

Progress ..... Post Production  
Release Date ..... December 1976  
**Synopsis:** A television drama on baby bashing.

## SEA CREW

Production Company ..... Film Australia, Eric Porter Productions  
Director ..... Michael Robertson  
Screenplay ..... Michael Robertson  
Producer ..... Peter Johnson  
Photography ..... Phil Pike  
Editor ..... Klaus Jaritz  
Production Manager ..... Allen Hayes  
Sound Recordist ..... David Macconachie  
Mixer ..... David Macconachie  
Length ..... 12 min.  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... Shooting  
Release Date ..... March 1977  
**Synopsis:** A recruiting film for apprentices within the Australian Navy.

## SPORTING LIFE

Production Company ..... Film Australia  
Distribution Company ..... Film Australia  
Director ..... David Roberts  
Screenplay ..... David Roberts  
Producer ..... Peter Johnson  
Photography ..... Andy Fraser  
Mixer ..... Julian Ellingworth  
Length ..... 25 min.  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... Shooting  
Release Date ..... March 1977  
**Synopsis:** A slightly different look at Australia's sporting people and attitudes.

## TEA AND SUGAR TRAIN

Production Company ..... Film Australia  
Distribution Company ..... Film Australia  
Director ..... David Haythornthwaite  
Screenplay ..... David Haythornthwaite  
Producer ..... Donald Murray  
Photography ..... Ross King  
Sound Recordist ..... Roberta Hayes  
Mixer ..... Julian Ellingworth  
Length ..... 27 min.  
Color Process ..... Eastmancolor  
Progress ..... Shooting  
Release Date ..... Early 1977  
**Synopsis:** The history and modern methods of supplying the Outback with supplies.

## AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION

Projects given financial support during the period July-October 1976:

### SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT/ PRE- PRODUCTION APPROVALS

**July:**  
Ayten Kuyululu  
Project: **The Battle of Broken Hill**  
\$5000  
Guild Productions  
Project: **The Bed**  
\$6000

**August:**  
Ian Barry  
Project: **Sparks**  
\$990  
Ayten Kuyululu  
Project: **The Battle of Broken Hill**  
\$5000

Film Makers Four  
Project: **Cry of the Bulls**  
\$4000  
Max Richards  
Project: **Four Wheel Drive**  
\$5000

Francis L. Brown/Oscar Whitbread  
Project: **Mary and Joe**  
\$7500  
Martin Williams Associates  
Project: **Mr Hawke and the Missile Assassins**  
\$5000

**September:**  
Millozza Film Co.  
Project: **Yellow Pyjama Girl**  
\$2500

David Baker/Stoney Creek Films  
Project: **Needles**  
\$7000.

**October:**  
Keith Salvat  
Project: **Break Point**  
\$4200

Royce Smeal Film Productions  
Project: **The Last Run of the Kameruka**  
\$6000

Peter Thompson/Jack Thompson  
Project: **The Burning**  
\$12,000

Philip Noyce  
Project: **Simmonds and Newcombe**  
\$10,666

Bert Deling  
Project: **Child of My Time**  
\$5350

## PRODUCTION APPROVALS

**July:**  
Phillip Adams  
Project: **The Getting of Wisdom**  
\$200,000

Foresthorne Films  
Project: **The Irishman**  
\$300,000

Fitzgerald Enterprises/Trenchard Productions  
Project: **Deathcheaters**  
An additional \$25,000 to increase the investment from \$50,000 to \$75,000

Limelight Productions  
Project: **The Picture Show Man**  
An additional \$36,000 taking investment to \$286,000

**August:**  
Highway Productions  
Project: **Lost in the Tube**  
An additional \$4500

John Heyer  
Project: **The Reef**  
\$72,710

Pisces Productions  
Project: **Mango Tree**  
\$250,000

Ko-An Productions  
Project: **The Daughters of Fire**  
\$10,000

Edgecliff Films  
Project: **The F. J. Holden**  
\$145,816

Hexagon Productions  
Project: **High Roll**  
\$200,000

**September:**  
Ebsen Storm  
Project: **In Search of Anna**  
\$115,000

Cash Harmon Television.  
Project: **Little Nellie Kelly**  
\$150,000

TLN Film Production  
Project: **Body Count**  
\$50,000

**October:**  
McElroy & McElroy  
Project: **The Last Wave**  
\$207,000

Clare Beach Films Pty Ltd.  
Project: **Summerfield**  
\$250,000

PIFT/Judy Prindiville  
Project: **Stick 'n' Stone Farm**  
\$9000

Ian Barry  
Project: **Sparks**  
An increase from \$189,923 to \$250,000

## DISTRIBUTION APPROVALS

**July:**  
McElroy & McElroy  
Project: **The Cars That Ate Paris**  
\$435

Anthony Buckley Productions  
Project: **Caddie**  
\$20,000

Timon Productions  
Project: **Avengers of the Reef**  
\$10,000

**August:**  
Gillian Armstrong  
Project: **The Singer and the Dancer**  
\$6000

**September:**  
Yoram Gross  
Project: **Dot and the Kangaroo**  
\$4154.76

**October:**  
Motion Picture Productions  
Project: **Mad Dog**  
\$5000

## PACKAGE DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS

**July:**  
Samson Productions  
\$44,500  
Murphy Bond Enterprises  
\$49,477

**August:**  
Glyn Davies Package  
\$7500

**September:**  
Slick Films  
\$5700

## DECEMBER 1976

The Australian Film Commission has announced its first allocation of grants from funds recently transferred from the Film, Radio and Television Board of the Australia Council to the Creative Development Branch of the Australian Film Commission. A total of 42 films will go into production as a result of these grants. In addition, 12 scriptwriters have been awarded grants to write scripts for film and television projects. Details appear below; Experimental Film and Television Fund grants will be listed in the next issue.

## FILM PRODUCTION FUND

Paul Cox (VIC)  
Project: **Crying in the Garden**  
\$32,000

Theo Van Leeuwen (NSW)  
Project: **Mortimer**  
\$34,978

Mischa Nussinov (NSW)  
Project: **Balance**  
\$25,000

Dennis O'Rourke (QLD)  
Project: **The Shark Callers**  
\$25,000

Ian Stocks (NSW)  
Project: **The Tree**  
\$25,000

## SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT FUND

NSW  
Bruce Allen  
Project: **33 Days**  
\$2,000  
Gordon Bick  
Project: **Man Bites Dog**  
\$1,600  
Bob Ellis/Richard Beckett  
Project: **By-Line**  
\$2,400

Janet Isaac  
Project: **Miranda**  
\$1,250

David Marsh  
Project: **I Prote**  
\$1,700

Graydon Neil  
Project: **Tattoo's**  
\$1,500

Gilbert Scrine  
Project: **Untitled**  
\$1,000

Lesley Tucker  
Project: **Cursed**  
\$1,800

VIC.  
Andrew Phillips  
Project: **No Where Man**  
\$1,000

John Smythe  
Project: **Happy as Larry**  
\$2,000

WA  
Theo Mathews/James De Lestang  
Project: **Verona Rodriguez**  
\$1,500

QLD  
Christopher Cordeaux  
Project: **Undertakers**  
\$2,250

The Australian Film Commission also approved grants for 1976/77 to a number of film organisations previously funded by the Film, Radio and Television Board.

These were —  
The Australian Film Institute  
\$300,000  
Paddington Town Hall Trust  
\$163,100  
Sydney Film-makers Co-operative Ltd.  
\$71,200  
Melbourne Film-makers Co-operative Ltd.  
\$46,100  
Melbourne Access & Media Co-operative Ltd.  
\$41,440  
Perth Institute of Film and Television  
\$35,000



# JOHN BARRY GROUP

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## INTRODUCES TO AUSTRALIA THE *TODD-AO 35* ANAMORPHIC LENS SYSTEM

The \*TODD-AO 35 system was recently acquired by Cinema Products Corporation of Los Angeles, and the John Barry Group, who are their sole representatives in Australia, have purchased a range of lenses together with the Exclusive Rental Franchise for Australia, New Zealand and South East Asia.

These high quality anamorphic 35mm lenses were designed by Dr Richard Vetter (of the TODD-AO Corporation), who received an \*U.S. and foreign patents pending.

Academy Award in 1973 for their improved anamorphic focusing system — a system which results in the lowest distortion yet achieved by any anamorphic lenses.

TODD-AO 35 anamorphic (scope) lenses are computer designed to the highest standards of the motion picture industry. In addition to unexcelled quality, their optics have the added advantage of maintaining a constant squeeze ratio (2:1) of the image at all focus distances without distortion.

All TODD-AO 35 lenses were designed with the objective of incorporating maximum flexibility without sacrificing picture quality. All lenses may be used interchangeably on standard BNC-R, BNC, Mark II and Arriflex cameras. Other features aimed at reducing production costs include a 200mm macro-telephoto lens capable of focusing from a few inches to infinity, and a zoom lens (10 to 1) with focal lengths ranging from 50mm to 500mm.



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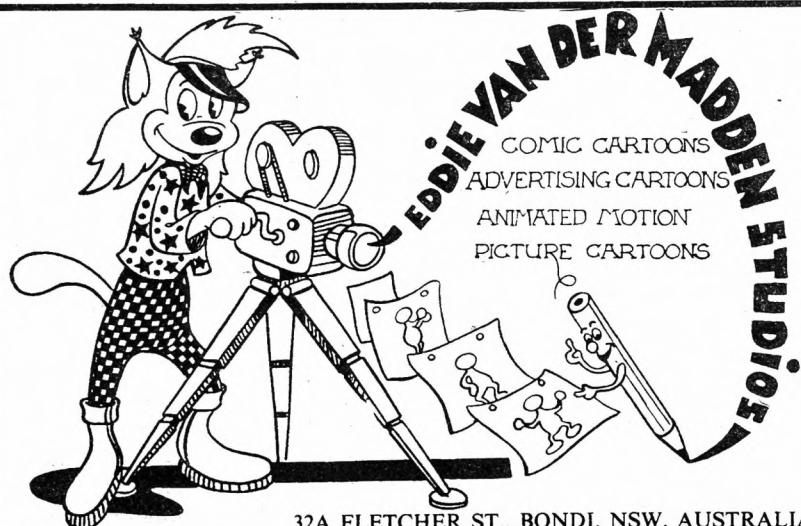
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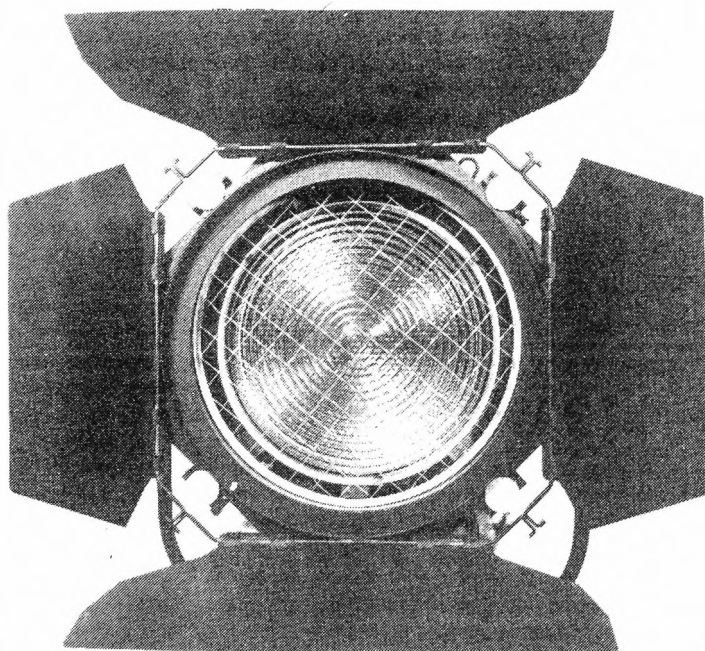
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# INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTION ROUND-UP

## FRANCE

After the long delay since directing *Doctor in the Nude*, Alain Jessua is to make *The Voice of Armageddon*, with Alain Delon and Jean Yanne. And Marcel Carné returns to the cinema with *The Bible: An Oratorio*, a film based on the mosaics of the Basilica of Monreale (Sicily).

Joseph Losey is rumored to have finally set up a film of Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*, from a screenplay by Harold Pinter. According to *Variety*, it may be a two-part film with a television spinoff.

Other new films include: Just Jaeckin's *Playmate*; Michel Delville's *The Apprentice Rat*; Claude Goretta's *The Lace-Maker*; and Yves Boisset's *The Mauve Taxi*, with Charlotte Rampling, Philippe Noiret and Peter Ustinov. And Constantin Costa-Gavras may make a film with Robert Redford from a Franco Solinas screenplay.

Roger Vadim is to film another Francoise Sagan play, *Happiness, Odds & Evens*; while Philippe de Broca's new film will star Marlene Jobert and Jean Claude Brialy. It is still untitled.



## ITALY

Tinto Brass and Penthouse-Rossellini are being very secretive about *Gore Vidal's Caligula*, a film based on the life of the Roman emperor. Maria Schneider has left, denouncing the sexual tastes of Brass as she went, and has been replaced by Theresa Anne Savoy from Brass' earlier *Salon Kitty*. The set is closed, Gore Vidal is allegedly banned from observing the shooting, and the various press handouts have come under attack for being less than descriptive.

Francesco Rosi, director of *Cadaveri Eccellenti*, is to shoot *The Other Half of the Sky*, with Monica Vitti, in Australia. The same company is also making *Look Forward to Seeing You Again*, a comedy to be made by the brilliant Italian director of *Black Holiday*, Marco Leto.

After the success of the recent "Violence" films *Violent Naples*, *Violent Milan*, and Brass' Nazi re-creation, *Salon Kitty*, Italian producers are following up with violent Nazi films, such as *The Deported Women of the SS Special Section* and *SS-17 Lieben-Comp*. But the most controversial film is sure to be Mario Bavo's *Baby Kong*, "the Italian answer to the American *King Kong*". Letters from De Laurentis have apparently been sent warning of copyright infringement.

New Italian films include Lucio Fulci's *Seven Notes in Black* with Jennifer O'Neill; Liliana Cavani's *Beyond Good and Evil*, starring Dominique Sanda,



Phillippe Leroy and Virna Lisi; Salvatore Samperi's *Sturmtruppen*, with Corinne Clery; and Dino Risi's *The Bishop's Bedroom*, with Ugo Tognazzi, Ornella Muti and Patrick Dewaere.

## U.S.

Nicholas Roeg has been signed up by Coppola's Cinema Seven to film Joe Gore's novel *Hammett*, a fictional mystery based on the writer of the same name. Another Britisher, Peter Brook, is to direct *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, based on Georges Ivanovich Gurdjieff's autobiography — to be shot in Egypt, France and Afghanistan.

In an advertisement in *Variety* (October 20), Penthouse Films International listed their next three projects: a new film by Federico Fellini (untitled); *The Dreams on Me*, by Dotson Roder, and *That's It*, by Robert Klane.

Hal Ashby's first film since *Shampoo* will be *Coming Home*, with Jane Fonda and Jack Nicholson. Shooting starts on January 3 from a script by Waldo Salt, who also wrote *Midnight Cowboy* and *Day of the Locust*.



Soon for release, Ella Kazan's *The Last Tycoon*.

Films now in production or post-production include Martin Ritt's *Casey's Shadow* with Walter Matthau; Tom Gries' film on Muhammad Ali called *The Greatest*, which stars Ali, and Ernest Borgnine as his trainer Angelo Dundee. Michael Anderson is making *Orca*, with Richard Harris and Charlotte Rampling; and Terrence Malick, director of the acclaimed *Badlands*, is presently finishing *Days of Heaven*.



Robert Altman, after the controversial *Buffalo Bill and the Indians*, is back with *Three Women*, starring Shelly Duval, Sissy Spacek and Janice Rule. Duval is an Altman regular, Spacek the lead of Brian de Palma's latest success, *Carrie*, and Janice Rule a somewhat neglected actress who starred in Arthur Penn's *The Chase*.

Two young filmmakers actively engaged in production are Lamont Johnson, director of *Lipstick*, who is making *Catch a Falling Star*, and Curtis Harrington who is now shooting *Bloody Ruby*.

## BRITAIN

After *Get Carter* and *Pulp*, an excursion to Hollywood *The Terminal Man* and a long period of seeming inactivity, Mike Hodges has two features planned. The first is *Philby* with Michael Caine in the lead role. Philby has apparently sent messages out of the Soviet Union complaining about the casting, stating they should have chosen someone from Oxford "like me." The second film is for producer Michael Klinger, a black comedy to be scripted by Hodges entitled *Chilian Club*. Other Klinger projects include *Eagle in the Sky*, *Green Beach* and *Limey*.

After a notable acting career, Lionel Jeffries is enjoying a no less acclaimed career as a director, and is presently working on *The Water Babies*, with James Mason and Billie Whitelaw. Also working in Britain at present, is ex-Czech director, Ivan Passer. His *The Silver Bears* stars Michael Caine, Cybill Shepherd, Louis Jourdan, Stephane Audran and David Warner.

Jeanne Moreau is to make her second film, *Love*, from a script by Lady Antonia Fraser, Penelope Gilliat, Germaine Greer, Edna O'Brien, Liv Ullmann and Mai Zetterling.

Another French director working for a British company is Claude Chabrol. He is presently shooting *The Petersburg-Cannes Express*, with Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland, from a screenplay by Alan Scott and Chris Bryant.





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### CAST

Arthur Dignam	.....	Doctor
Rufus Collins	.....	Bob
Nell Campbell	.....	Kym
Andrew Sharp	.....	Steve
Kate Fitzpatrick	.....	Rachel

### CREW

Director	.....	Jim Sharman
Producer	.....	Mike Thornhill
Art Director	.....	Jane Norris
Director of Photography	.....	Russell Boyd
Wardrobe Designer	.....	Kristian Fredrikson
Composer	.....	Cameron Allen
Editor	.....	Sara Bennett



Top left: Andrew Sharp as Steve.

Top right: Arthur Dignam as the Doctor involved in complex experiments into the human memory.

Centre left: The Doctor and Kym (Nell Campbell): a strange encounter on a remote beach.

Left: Kate Fitzpatrick as Rachel.

Below: The Doctor and his assistant Bob (Rufus Collins).





# BREAK OF DAY

"A love story set in a small Victorian mining town in 1920. Tom, a partially disabled Anzac returns and attempts to settle into marriage and a job. Restless, he is unable to assume the yoke and finds himself drawn to Alice, a painter from the city who offers him a taste of the free bohemian life. Their illicit idyll is interrupted when some of her friends drive down from the city and he finds himself ill at ease in their company. This disturbing encounter leads him to evaluate the two lifestyles and finally he resigns himself to what he discovers to be his real world."

## CAST

Sara Kestelman	Alice
Andrew McFarlane	Tom
Ingrid Mason	Beth
Tony Barry	Joe
Eileen Chapman	Susan

## CREW

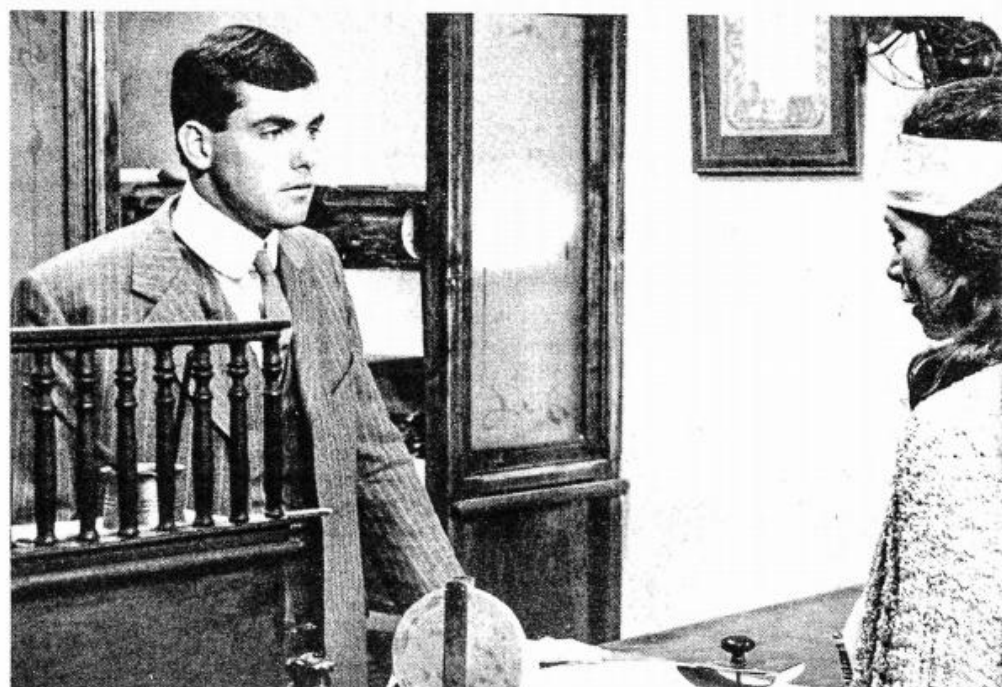
Producer	Pat Lovell
Director	Ken Hannam
Screenplay	Cliff Green
Director of Photography	Russell Boyd
Production Designer	Wendy Dickson
Editor	Max Lemon

Top right: Alice (Sara Kestelman) and a friend from the small mining town where she has settled.

Below: Alice's Bohemian friends arriving from Melbourne.

Centre right: Tom (Andrew McFarlane) and Alice.

Right: Sara Kestelman, John Bell and Andrew McFarlane.



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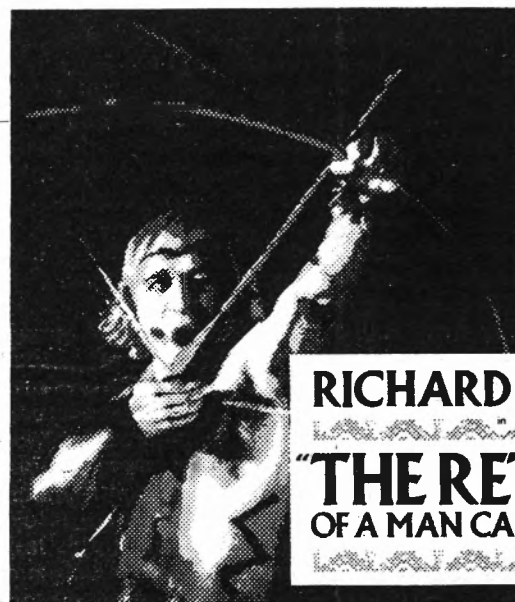
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Based upon a character from "A Man Called Horse" by Dorothy M. Johnson Directed by IRVIN KERSHNER Produced by TERRY MORSE, JR.  
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# Film Reviews



Shelley Winters and Roman Polanski in *The Tenant*.

## THE TENANT

Keith Connolly

Roman Polanski's *The Tenant* is a striking study in paranoia. It takes a haunted, Nykvist-eye view of an embattled psychotic fearfully watching the world gang up on him.

Is it all in his disordered mind, or is he really the victim of a conspiracy? The film is never explicit.

The man quite clearly is in the grip of a mania which escalates from suspicion to full-blown delusion. But Polanski, not for the first time, also insinuates that society bears heavy responsibility for those individuals who cannot cope with its pressures.

It is very good Polanski. He is patently in his element dabbling in the macabre, and the film is a personal tour de force. Polanski not only directed, he co-authored the screenplay and acted the central character.

The resultant hypnotic narrative is basically plotless, flowing from incident to manic incident with the compulsive inevitability of a nightmare.

It is impregnated with Polanski's rare capacity to infer a burgeoning disquiet. The early sequences, tautly menacing, give way to a leaping torrent of hysteria. Then he hits us with an escalating sequence of visual shocks as the story whirls to surreal climax.

It begins when Trelkovsky (Polanski), an awkward clerk in his 30s, diffidently seeks a Parisian apartment which has become vacant because the previous tenant jumped out of the window.

Once installed, he is increasingly oppressed by complaining neighbors, an apparent

conspiracy to force him to adopt the identity of his predecessor, mysterious noises and staring strangers. He flees the apartment, hides in a hotel, but is brought back after an accident. Then he takes the way out that looms with gathering irresistibility.

All this has a strongly Kafka flavor. Its protagonist, like his counterpart in *The Trial*, seems to be the hapless victim of omnipotent forces punishing him for unknown offences.

The simplest acts become intolerably difficult, he is persecuted and manipulated at every turn. Polanski's images become increasingly surrealist as his subject's forebodings grow.

There are also important socio-political overtones. Trelkovsky is a Pole who has recently acquired French citizenship. But he is still an outsider, as almost everyone, from the landlord (Melvyn Douglas) and his frowzy concierge (Shelley Winters) to a bullying policeman (Jean Pierre Bagot) make plain.

He has only two allies — significantly, a fellow East European (Lila Kedrova) and an uninhibited girl (Isabelle Adjani).

Polanski, himself a refugee from political and artistic overlordship, is well aware that ideologically-tinged xenophobia is by no means the preserve of the eastern bloc.

There are 1984-ish connotations in Trelkovsky's fear that he is being pressed into another identity and his terrified discovery (or delusion) of hieroglyphs on a lavatory wall. The message is: conform. Whether you agree or understand is irrelevant.

Filmed in Paris, with the principals speaking English and the minor actors dubbed



*The Tenant*, a striking study in paranoia.

from the French (another result of French xenophobia?), *The Tenant* is richly atmospheric.

An air of dread is invoked from the moment Trelkovsky inspects the apartment. Derived at first from the inanimate — furniture, fixtures, the gloomy building itself — apprehension thickens as the other occupants begin to lean on him.

Sven Nykvist's cinematography conveys this with characteristic insight, his inflexions of color delineating emotional gradation as sensitively as he once revealed so many dimensions of black and white for Bergman.

He effectively contrasts Trelkovsky's dark, constricting existence and the light and color of life outside.

Nykvist is the star technical turn of a production also notable for startling use of ageing, well-known actors in key roles. What time (and make-up) has done to these familiar faces heightens the pervading sense of decrepitude and despair.

Melvyn Douglas is a gaunt godfather, Shelley Winters an aggrieved drudge, Jo Van Fleet a bitchy busybody. In sharp contrast is Isabelle Adjani (of *Adele H*) as a naively-impetuous friend.

Then, in a class of its own, is Polanski's remarkable performance. His hangdog

portrayal is cleverly provocative, stirring both irritation and sympathy. There are suggestions, which could be personal references, of cultural as well as psychological disorientation.

After all, Polanski has lived in four Western countries besides his native Poland. Presumably, he intends the jibes about foreign origin to indicate that social alienation has exacerbated Trelkovsky's disorder.

Similarly, when the tenant bemusedly descends to transvestism, it is not so much sexual aberration as hapless acquiescence in what he believes "they" want of him.

Besieged in this hostile environment, he is fleetingly aware that his mind is cracking. Without teeth or limbs, he mutters, he would still be himself. But cut off his head and which would it be — "me and my head or me and my body"?

He loses control of his destiny, his identity and ultimately his will to live. Then society rejects him yet again — because he is the product of its own callous handiwork.

The sardonic suggestion, present in a good deal of Polanski's work, is that man's collective impulses inevitably oppress the weakest and most vulnerable.

Although Polanski has spent many years outside his native land, this outlook has nationalistic as well as individual implications. I am sometimes teased by the thought that in their most harrowing films, Polanski and compatriots like Borowczyk and Wajda are paying the world out for what it has done to Poland.

**THE TENANT** Directed by Roman Polanski. Distributed by C.I.C. Produced by Andrew Braunsberg. Production company, Paramount. Screenplay by Gerard Brach, Roman Polanski (based on the novel by Roland Topor). Director of Photography, Sven Nykvist. Edited by Francoise Bonnot. Music by Philippe Sarde. Production Designer, Pierre Guffroy. Costumes, Jacques Schmidt. Sound by Michele Boehm, Jacques Audiard, Jean Pierre Ruh, Jean Neny, Louis Gimel. Cast: Roman Polanski, Isabelle Adjani, Shelley Winters, Melvyn Douglas, Jo Van Fleet, Bernard Fresson, Lila Kedrova, Jacques Monod, Claude Dauphin, Jean Pierre Bagot, Florence Blot. Eastmancolor. Length 126 min. France. 1976.



## DON'S PARTY

Raymond Stanley.

After Ray Lawler's *Summer of the 17th Doll*, *Don's Party*, by David Williamson, is probably Australia's best known and most successful play, partly because of its explicit sexual dialogue and antics. It has now been filmed, scripted by Williamson who holds the unique position of having written more screenplays than any of his contemporaries (*Stork*, *The Family Man* segment of *Libido*, *Petersen*, *The Removalists*, the forthcoming *Mrs Eliza Fraser*, and another commissioned by Hexagon for next year).

*Don's Party* is set on Election Day — October 25, 1969 — when it was thought the Labor Party would be swept into power after 20 years in Opposition. But the Liberal Party was re-elected for the ninth time in succession. To coincide with televising the election results, Don — a school teacher and failed novelist — throws a party, although his wife, Kath, believes "it's just an excuse for a booze-up".

The guests are mainly Don's friends from university days, together with their women folk: Mal and Jenny, living beyond their means and borrowing from Don, although Mal has twice his income; Mack, a kinky photographer who hid in a cupboard to take pictures of other men making love to his wife who has now left him; dentist Evan and his arty wife Kerry; and lawyer Cooley, a great ladykiller who brings along his latest, Susan. They are all die-hard Labor supporters.

Kath's friends are the more conservative industrial accountant, Simon and his wife Jody. All appear maladjusted to some degree.

Groggling as they swap dirty stories, the men boast of their womanizing and make passes (sometimes more than that) at each other's women; all except Simon and Evan.

The women (when they are not in the arms of another's man) sit around and discuss their children, bedroom performances of their men and sizes of their sexual organs. Simon finds the frankness of their conversation disturbing and leaves. Evan becomes jealous and breaks up a love scene between Kerry and Cooley. He leaves the party, but returns and beats up Cooley, who he thinks is still with Kerry. But Kerry had already left to join another lover!

Definitely a "musical beds" affair with echoes of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* and *Boys in the Band* creeping in. Behind it all Williamson is pin-pointing a staleness in marriage, class snobbery, the permissive age, problems of on-coming middle-age and unfulfilled pipedreams.

A fault of *The Removalists* film version (also based on a Williamson play) was that it stuck too rigidly to the play script and action occurred within the confines of a small flat with only minimal extension. *Don's Party* also follows its original creation and, although events do happen outside the house (in particular a nude bathing sequence in the next door neighbor's pool), the scene is mostly inside the house.

Unlike *The Removalists*, however, the effect is rarely claustrophobic, as director Beresford and cameraman McAlpine are constantly on the move, switching from group to group, room to room, breaking into scraps of conversation and bursting into pieces of action. Unfortunately it sometimes slows down the pace and breaks away just when interest is being aroused.

Much of the television election facts and figures have been deleted or fade into the background, but otherwise action and dialogue are straight from the play.

The cast of the film version of *The Removalists* had, at some time or another, performed their roles on the stage. Their knowledge of the characters was, therefore, an asset to the film. And so it is with *Don's Party*.



*Don's Party*, pinpointing the problems of on-coming middle-age and unfulfilled pipedreams.

Two in particular turn in strong performances: Pat Bishop, who was Cath in the initial production, lends conviction this time around to Jenny; and Graeme Blundell, who directed the original *Pram Factory* production, gets away from his Alvin Purple image to give an outstanding performance as the pipe-smoking, straightlaced and generally even-tempered Simon.

The biggest disappointment is Harold Hopkins as Cooley. As interpreted by John Ewart on stage, Cooley was an inexhaustible, bragging, somewhat rough extrovert, simply bursting at the seams with randiness, yet somehow always likeable. In comparison, Hopkins' fornicator is too young and spruce looking.

Neither is Graham Kennedy able to eclipse the memorable stage performance by the late James H. Bowles as Mack. Kennedy is merely 'putting on' his usual television performance, and it is hard to disassociate his television personality from his 'acted' role.

Fortunately Kennedy's style mostly suits the part, but if he is to fulfil his potential as a film actor, he needs scripts specially tailored to his personality.

Once accustomed to his youthful appearance, John Hargreaves (a last minute substitute for a sick Barry Crocker) is thoroughly convincing as Don. And although too mature looking, Ray Barrett turns in a very satisfactory performance as Mal (elevated in the film to Don's psychology lecturer instead of fellow student). Kit Taylor, however, seems unable to make very much of Evan.

The men's roles are meatier than the women's, which is just as well since, apart from Pat Bishop, their performances are below par. One can only regard them as adequate, competent, and sometimes even amateur.

For those who have not seen the stage version, the film will probably be satisfying; others who have are likely to be disappointed.

**DON'S PARTY** Directed by Bruce Beresford. Produced by Phillip Adams. Associate producer, David Burrows. Screenplay by David Williamson, based on his play. Director of photography, Don McAlpine. Edited by Bill Anderson. Cast: John Hargreaves, Jeanie Drynan, Graeme Blundell, Veronica Lang, Ray Barrett, Pat Bishop, Graham Kennedy, Kit Taylor, Candy Raymond, Harold Hopkins, Clare Binney. Length 90 min. Australia, 1976.

## THE OMEN

John C. Murray

*The Omen* is one of those films where conventions are followed as rigidly as wheels on a railway track. Its shape and development are held so firmly within generic rules that, inevitably, questions about what is going to happen take a bad second place to an interest in how things will be shown to happen.

Indeed, seen in the meanest possible light, *The Omen* is a perfect candidate for those *Mad* magazine "Guess Who's Going to be Killed" parodies.

The obsessive Father Brennan (Patrick Troughton) emerges from the woodwork to warn Robert Thorn (Gregory Peck) about the satanic power invested in his six-year-old son, Damien (Harvey Stephens). From his first appearance, we know that Brennan's life expectancy is shortening with every passing minute. An oddly well-informed and omnipresent reporter, Jennings (David Warner), becomes interested in the circumstances surrounding Damien's birth, and as-

sists Thorn in his search for the truth.

We faithfully accept that Jennings is not going to be around when the final credits roll. From the grimly suggestive opening titles, to the final shot of Damien turning to smile significantly at us as he stands at his parents' graveside, *The Omen* plays the game straight down the line.

Yet, as so often happens with strongly generic films, this predictability of content, and occasionally of form, gives the viewer breathing space to observe and admire the sheer competence with which the exercise is conducted. And competent *The Omen* is; an almost self-conscious display of professionalism. This shows through in a number of ways.

While David Seltzer's screenplay is perhaps more open to pragmatic objections than other films in the same "children-possessed-by-something-diabolical" family (Thorn, for instance, seems singularly unable to muster the assistance you would imagine a senior diplomat and confidant of the U.S. President could whistle up), the writing of the set-piece horrors is very well controlled. They fit together as neatly as the



Katherine (Lee Remick) and Damien (Harvey Stephens) under attack from a pack of baboons during a trip to a wildlife reserve in *The Omen*.



units in a Lego block construction.

The death of Damien's nurse (the first major element in the succession of blood-lettings) is almost tossed away. But each subsequent killing or act of violence — the deaths of Brennan, Katherine (Lee Remick), Jennings, and Mrs Baylock (Billie Whitelaw); an attack by wild dogs in an ancient burial ground; the final confrontation between Thorn and Damien — is placed and developed with a progressive attention to detail. The sense of an unlimited escalation of violence is orchestrated in the script carefully and intelligently.

Further, Richard Donner (well aware, one suspects, of both the possibilities and limitations of the exercise) realizes these all-important sequences with an enthusiasm tempered where needed by a calculated restraint. If the 'accidental' beheading of Jennings is a riot of bravura special-effects, Donner elsewhere shows that he recognizes when enough is as good as a feast. For example, the ingenious idea of matching Jerry Goldsmith's chilling choral music to the padding of a fearsome dog as it roams a mansion in search of Thorn, is kept within limits, the chant being little more than a half-audible whisper on the soundtrack.

Again, relying on sly suggestion rather than outright statement, Donner films the sequence where Thorn and Jennings are digging in a ruined Etruscan graveyard so that we sense they are under observation. The camera's viewpoint (high above them), its occasional lateral and vertical unsteadiness, and the random blocking of its view by shadowy leaves and branches, intimate that we are watching them through the eyes of unsuspected and malevolent presences. This is confirmed a little later when a pack of wild dogs emerges from the surrounding hills to launch a murderous attack on the two men.

In fact all the way through *The Omen* one notes a series of finely-achieved moments. Such effects as the over-loud smashing of splintered glass, when the suiciding nurse plummets at the end of a rope down the side of a mansion and swings into a window; the crescendo of roaring wind and thunderclaps, as Brennan flees for his life through a wood to the sanctuary of a church; the half-seductive half-pathetic innocence with which Damien pleads for his life, as Thorn prepares to sacrifice him. All these and many other scenes reveal the painstaking care exercised on the film.

It has to be said, though, that there are some aspects of *The Omen* which are less happy. As has been remarked, we are under

undue pressure to suspend disbelief in taking Thorn's behavior seriously.

Apart from this, on too many occasions Donner relies on the old chestnut of covering a transition by using huge close-ups of eyes (Billie Whitelaw's Mrs Baylock especially suffering in this regard). One recognizes what Donner wants the device to imply — the all-pervasiveness of evil — but the effect is, I think, exhausted of all impact.

It's hard to escape the impression, too, that the actors are mere ciphers in the film's construction. One looks in vain here for anything distantly approaching John Ryan's performance in *It's Alive!*, or Deborah Kerr's (or Pamela Franklin's) in *The Innocents*. A serious consequence of this is that *The Omen* never really generates any depth of concern for the leading characters, and ultimately the film is left hollow at the centre.

This is not a plea for 'warmly human' cinema, but is simply to note that, given its nature, *The Omen* could have brought us to care more for Thorn and the others than we ever actually do. When Damien looks directly at us with his knowing smile at the film's end, we should have sensed the tragic irony that marked the last moments of, say, *The Bad Seed* (the guilty survive; the innocent perish).

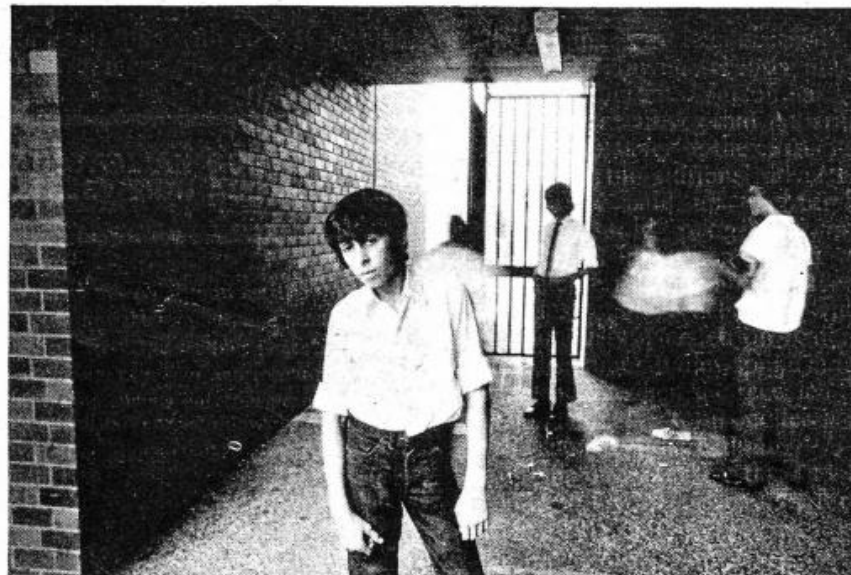
As it is, we coldly admire the final seamless completion of the generic pattern — the task expertly accomplished — but feel little more than that.

**THE OMEN** Directed by Richard Donner. Distributed by Twentieth Century-Fox. Produced by Harvey Bernhard. Executive Producer, Mace Neufeld. Associate Producer, Charles Orme. Screenplay by David Seltzer. Production Company, Twentieth Century-Fox. A Mace Neufeld-Harvey Bernhard Production. Director of Photography, Gilbert Taylor. Edited by Stuart Baird. Music by Jerry Goldsmith. Art Direction by Carmen Dillon. Sound by Gordon Everett. Cast: Gregory Peck, Lee Remick, David Warner, Billie Whitelaw, Harvey Stevens, Leo McKern, Patrick Troughton, Martin Benson, Robert Rietty, Tommy Duggan, John Stride, Anthony Nicholls, Holly Palance. De Luxe Color. Length 111 min. U.S. 1976.

## SEEING RED AND FEELING BLUE and STIRRING

Virginia Duigan

The largely unscripted documentary carries a lot of inbuilt hazards. This is especially true of those films relying heavily on unrehearsed discussion by non-actors — with the decline of the notion of self-expression as an acquired art, most people are not notably



Stirring: not comfortable viewing for adults, particularly teachers.

lucid or articulate.

The presence of camera and crew is an inhibiting factor, a constant reminder that this apparently spontaneous chatter is all being indulged in for a purpose. The ulterior motive is the message: no amount of clever talk and accidental self-revelation will be much good unless something structured comes out of it.

The participants must pay for the privilege of being filmed by producing the goods. We don't want cinema verite for its own often tedious sake; we want life and rhythm and specific insights into the human condition.

But this kind of film still has the unique advantage of hindsight. The longer pauses and the less interesting repetitions could be edited out, much omitted, and in the right hands, a camera focussed on a face at a crucial moment could do something that no amount of scripted reaction would ever achieve. For an audience the rewards of this type of venture may be immense, in the feeling of actuality and urgency, in the experience of exploration and participation, and the occasional flash of transcendent excitement (the one thing that can never be planned, even in the director's rosiest pipedreams) when one is aware that a very special phenomenon has occurred. This could be an explosion of unexpected personal drama, or it could be the sensation of being a spectator at a moment of supreme significance in someone's life.

Both of these unforeseen bonuses are present in a modest way in Jane Oehr's two recent documentaries, *Seeing Red and Feeling Blue* and *Stirring*.

The two films are quite different in intention and style, and also in achievement. For me, *Seeing Red and Feeling Blue* was the less successful, partly perhaps because it was consciously breaking new ground with its subject matter (menstruation), but more importantly because it seemed uneasy in its structure and intentions.

The film was commissioned in 1975 by Film Australia as its contribution to International Women's Year. Its gestation has been associated with a certain amount of controversy. First, in gaining approval for the script idea (the director maintains that the then Media Minister, Doug McClelland, deliberated for two weeks, under the impression that it was a film about female masturbation) and later in the editing stage. The film was finally reduced by 13 minutes to just under a half-hour, a process that incurred much friction between director, editor and producer, some of which was aired publicly.

Jane Oehr claims that a number of key sequences have been omitted and all personal voice-over and ideological statements eliminated. Producer Suzanne Baker has denied charges of censorship, and called for audiences to be the judge of the finished product. So to the film itself. Taking six people from the Melbourne Women's Theatre



Thorn (Gregory Peck) fights for his life with an emissary of the devil in *The Omen*.



*The Omen*: The omnipresent reporter, Jennings (David Warner), attempts to convince Thorn that his life is in danger.



Group as a catalyst, it examines society's conditioning about menstruation and female sexuality via discussion, songs and illustrative sketches.

The film debates a central theme: the existence of negative feelings among women as related to menstrual taboos, their historical and social derivation and (tentatively) means of catharsis. To the extent that it raises a whole complex of questions and brings them into the open with frankness and courage, it is a valuable document.

Many women will be familiar with at least some of the sentiments and experiences of the group, expressed as they are with often painful clarity. The absurd and even horrifying accounts of girls' first menstrual periods — the myths born of ignorance, fear and distaste — make up a formidable social indictment.

In an attempt to humanize the subject there is much humor, some of it decidedly heavy-handed, but the pathos is never far behind. The film's format is fragmented and not always harmonious; a song about premenstrual tension ("I feel so flat/I've got the natural woman pre-menstrual blues") backs a street sequence of endless glum-faced women. Enough to make anyone want to opt out of femininity.

The film's most worthwhile function is its cautious probing into the sources of the now notorious low self-esteem among women in Western cultures. Freud's "anatomy is destiny," the idea that women are impaired men, that they are biologically inferior — such hoary heresies are dismissed with the contempt they deserve.

But *Seeing Red and Feeling Blue* will have succeeded only if it provokes further constructive debate and, specifically, an organized counter-attack on the problem by educators, parents and society. Ideally it should spawn a whole series of films for children. The onset of puberty, which in boys is a source of interest, pride and sexual involvement, is too often a time of shame and embarrassment for girls.

Women who are at ease with their own bodies, who positively like themselves, are going to contribute immeasurably to a society that is relaxed about sex generally. By failing to provide girls with means to self-esteem comparable with those it provides for male children, our culture has effectively denigrated women in their own eyes and brought on itself huge problems, whose tentacles extend into every area of life.

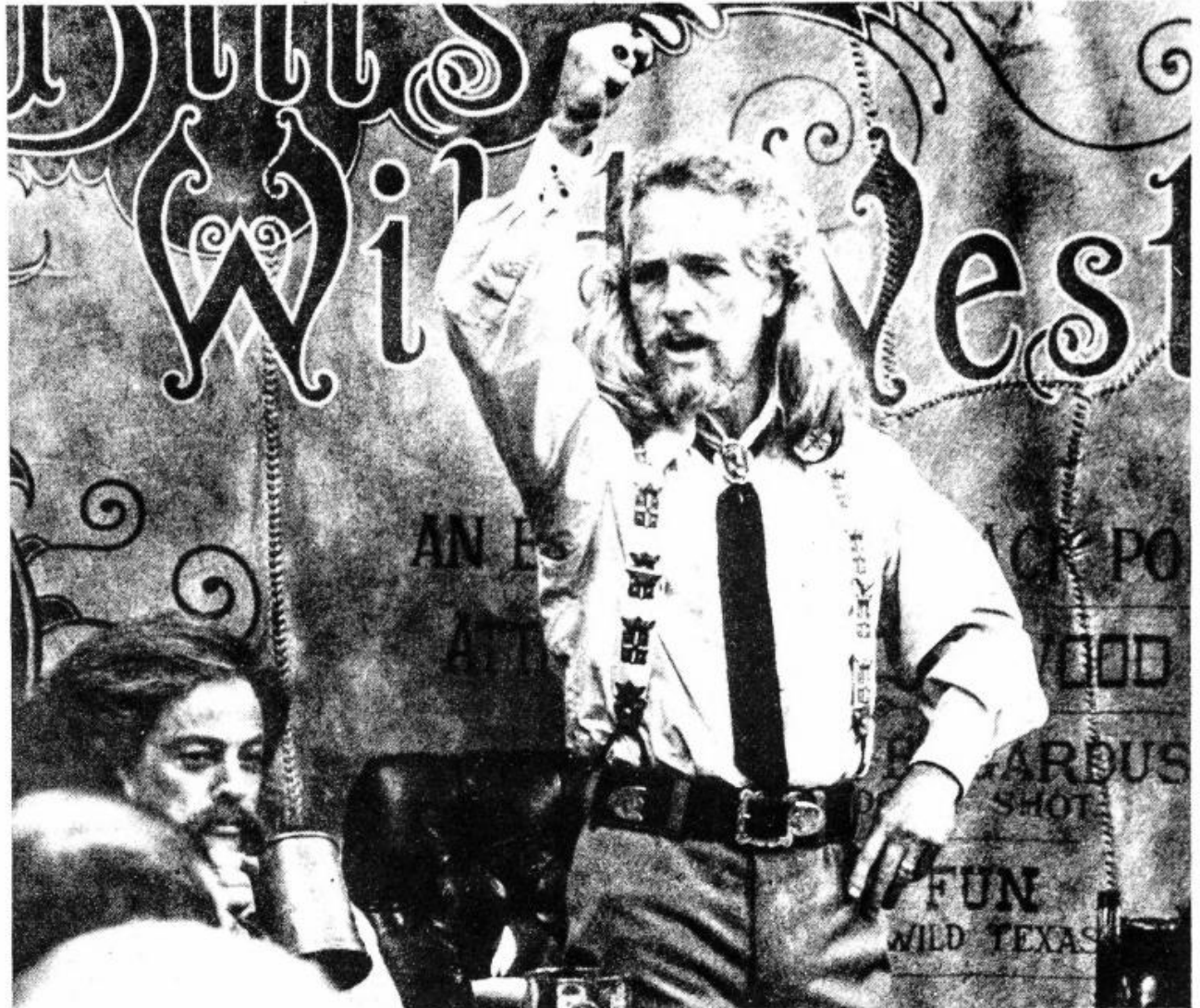
Since menstruation is undeniably a nuisance, research should be undertaken into the best way to treat it: with philosophical acceptance as an inevitable irritant, a consequence, like shaving for men, of being female (this attitude has been the prevailing one to date) or with a more enlightened and creative approach.

The film has helped to clarify the problem; wit, flair and energy are now needed to grapple with it.

To make *Stirring*, 10 hours of film were edited down to 60 brisk minutes. It is an absorbing and roughly stylish film, with pace, point and a genuine sense of excitement. Overtly a documentary record of an experimental project undertaken by one teacher in a Sydney boys' high school, the film's implications extend far beyond these limits. It becomes an implicit comment on the dilemmas of modern education, underlining the central problems with a clarity and punch that was, evidently, a bit too much for the NSW Education Department to stomach.

The teacher, a likeable enthusiast who is experienced enough to have rid himself of post-college illusions, is committed to establishing a genuinely productive dialogue with his class of rowdy fourth formers. The means to this end will be an investigation into the history and philosophy of corporal punishment with, naturally, special emphasis on its contemporary applications.

Two cameramen, Michael Edols and Jon Rhodes filmed the progress of this project in



Altman's William F. Cody (Paul Newman), a buffoon who has succumbed completely to the fantasies of his publicists.

the classroom and outside, with a singularly unobtrusive technique. The result is a film of quite remarkable authenticity and realism. The class situation is presented warts and all. The boys seem quite oblivious of the spectators, acting up and mucking about with unselfconscious naturalism. The most interesting aspect is the effect, which could not have been anticipated by the director or teacher, that the enterprise has on the boys themselves.

At the beginning of the film they are any class of bored, inarticulate, alienated kids. All the recognizable types are there: the bullies, stirrers and the brainy ones who are concealing the fact out of a shrewd sense of self-preservation. By the end of the film there are noticeable changes. The class no-hoper, described by other teachers as a disaster area, has taken over leadership of the project. Several boys have picked up basic interviewing skills, learning how to put an awkward question with tenacity and without rudeness.

The class as a whole has matured, only a little perhaps, but quite significantly nevertheless. Which is not to say that a miracle has occurred.

One of the film's great virtues is that it neither minimizes the difficulties of achieving anything with a set of disenchanted teenagers at a time when the damage has already been done, nor does it pretend to any artificial success.

At the end of the film the class has mobilized itself to act. The initial question that started everything off — the investigation into corporal punishment — has been forgotten. But the process of that inquiry, involving discussion, research, role playing and establishing community attitudes via questioning of staff and public, has given them a valuable insight into the means of initiating change. They have become politicized, and the realization that they are

not powerless, that even as kids they are not necessarily part of the great exploited, packs a potent kick.

The unfolding project has uncovered many sources of dissatisfaction that the boys feel about their school. In the course of their work they have questioned students from a nearby mixed high school, and have come to the conclusion that most of their grievances might be eliminated if they too were to turn co-ed.

The first step — a confrontation with the headmaster — achieves nothing (this sequence, in the light of what has gone before, is a masterpiece of exquisite irony). But one feels that this setback may not put an end to their determination, provided they can maintain their rage.

A film like *Stirring* is not comfortable viewing for adults, particularly teachers. Without taking sides, and, indeed, by maintaining a staunch impartiality, it effectively lays bare some of the iniquities of our creaking education system. But in providing an audience with a first-hand glimpse of the powerful consequences of a minor experiment, it is a sometimes exhilarating experience.

**SEEING RED AND FEELING BLUE** Directed by Jane Oehr. Distributed by Film Australia. Produced by Suzanne Baker. Screenplay by Suzanne Baker, Jane Oehr. Production Company, Film Australia. Director of Photography, Jon Rhodes. Edited by David Stiven. Music by Janie Conway, Marnie Martin. Sound by Ken Hammond. Cast: Women's Theatre Group, Melbourne. Color. Length 30 min. Australia, 1976.

**STIRRING** Directed by Jane Oehr. Distributed by Film Australia. Produced by Timothy Read. Research by Jane Oehr. Production Company, Australian Department of Education, Film Australia. Director of Photography, Mike Edols. Edited by Warwick Hercus. Length 60 min. Australia, 1975.

## BUFFALO BILL AND THE INDIANS

Marcus Cole

Robert Altman's *Buffalo Bill and The Indians* was "suggested" by Arthur Kopit's play *Indians*. But Altman's sentiments are not with Kopit; his jaundiced eye gives us something quite different in feeling.

Kopit's play shows William F. Cody as a man consumed by the myth entrepreneur Ned Buntline created, realizing all too late he is a dupe who has destroyed something he once had a very real stake in: the old West.

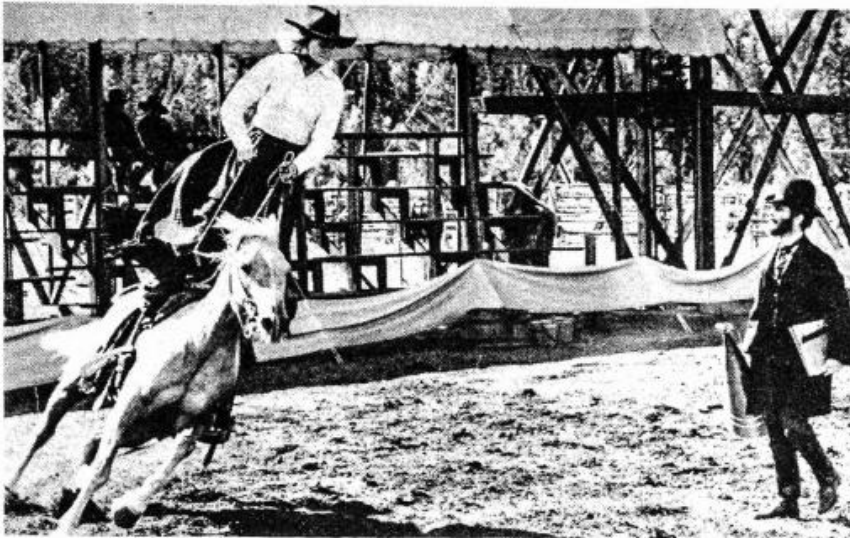
Altman's Cody is a buffoon who has succumbed completely to the fantasies of his publicists. Whatever dim-minded doubts Cody has are swept aside by his enthusiasm for the fast buck and his longing for a tarnished quasi-historical immortality. He can perceive nothing that will not serve his self-interest. He is a true product of "The Show Business" referred to throughout the film.

Kopit shows a degree of compassion for the second-rate frontiersman, who allowed himself to be deified for the titillation of the Eastern middle-class, in a series of dime novels and later in his own *Wild West Show*. He shows a pioneering innocence corrupted and celebrated simultaneously, and the dilemma it produces in the man.

Altman is content to set Cody up and knock him down. "The Star" — as he is called — is a vain, ageing matinee idol debauching and discarding culture in the form of operatic sopranos. He is a rumbustious adolescent vulgarian. He is infuriated and puzzled by Sitting Bull's unwillingness to join him and be part of "The Show Business".

Altman sets up his epic allegory at the expense of his characters. They are merely instruments of his myth-debunking virtuosity.





**Buffalo Bill:** A Wild West Show populated with characters we do not care about.

They are not people and we do not care about them.

We are asked to be content with the heavy-handed cynicism/satire that pours from the screen in an endless stream of jokey one-liners and rhetorical double-talk. Some of it is clever and illuminating, but ultimately it is deadening. The writing never progresses beyond its one opening statement; it just goes on embellishing. Everyone is crooked; everyone thrives on their crookedness, cannibalizing their illusions with relish.

The same note is struck time and time again. The president watches the show. "Now, there's a star," mutters an awe-struck member of Cody's crew, gazing at the supremely ordinary Grover Cleveland. Everyone is roped in, except the Indians. The allegory is so 'up front' there is room for little else.

The audience is given no choice in the matter, no room to assess or doubt. The film assumes we are at once sympathetic to its cliché theme of Corporate America, its stupid, brutal dream and its unthinking, rather than malevolent brutalization of all that is good, free, noble, etc. Maybe we are, but it would be nice if we could provide the response.

Altman shows the noble savage being exterminated by the white barbarian. This popular, new liberal breast-beating theme is as sentimental in its current extreme form as Errol Flynn's heroic Custer was in Raoul Walsh's *They Died With Their Boots On*. Only the end of the spectrum has changed.

In short, the film is so knowing in its assumptions and their presentation, so calculated, so pre-digested, we wonder whether there is any need of us as witnesses.

The film, no doubt, was all great fun in the making; it has that exuberance, love of digression and feeling of spontaneity that typifies much of Altman's work, but like *California Split* and *Nashville*, its color, movement and mood evocation cannot carry the thin narrative and one-note theme hammering underlying it. Where *Nashville* had a deluge of diverse characters and incident to maintain audience involvement — pageant wagons rolling by bumper to bumper — *Buffalo Bill and The Indians* is bogged down after the first 15 minutes. It has nowhere to go once its theme is revealed.

It is a flatulent allegorical comic-strip. With his best film, *The Long Goodbye*, Altman had the benefit of the strong narrative and well-rounded characters of Leigh Brackett's script to support his free-wheeling style and there was no danger of being becalmed in the centre ring as he is in *Buffalo Bill*.

At one point, near the end of the film, there is an attempt to keep a reasonably straight face with the inclusion of a "serious" scene. Sitting Bull has come back to haunt Cody after he has quit the Show, and subsequently been murdered by soldiers. Sadly, the scene lacks all credibility and even

seems tedious after all the frenetic jokiness and arch nonsense we have sat through. It seems cheap and theatrical. Just another turn in the arena: Banquo Bull!

One wishes Altman could have taken his material seriously. Heaven forbid he should go the full Dalton Trumbo, but you can't suddenly take your tongue out of your cheek an hour and a half into the film and start making points about characters who have had the credibility satirized out of them.

Paul Newman's Hon. William F. Cody, *Buffalo Bill*, is Paul Newman with blond wig and goatee displaying the impudent insouciance and featherweight charm that has made him a star since he gave up acting. (Does anyone remember his Rocky Graziano in Robert Wise's *Somebody Up There Likes Me*?). That is not to say he is bad. He does much the same sort of grizzled-lovable-me he did for John Huston in *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean*. He merely suits Altman's purpose: Newman the star, as *Buffalo Bill* the star.

Harvey Keitel, Geraldine Chaplin and Kevin McCarthy orbit around him. They are shamefully used. They have not been written parts at all. Keitel has nothing to do except bite his fingernails and pull on Newman's coat sleeve. They are all human sacrifices to the allegory.

Robert Altman is always an interesting filmmaker. His continuing exploration of American culture promises great things — and he says he is "just warming up." *Buffalo Bill and The Indians* is little more than *Nashville* reprised — once more without feeling.

**BUFFALO BILL AND THE INDIANS** Directed by Robert Altman. Distributed by Roadshow. Produced by Robert Altman. Screenplay by Alan Rudolph. Robert Altman. Production Company, Dino De Laurentiis Corporation. Director of Photography, Paul Lohmann. Edited by Peter Appleton, Dennis Hill. Music by Richard Baskin. Set Decoration by Tony Masters. Sound by Jim Webb, Chris McLaughlin. Cast: Paul Newman, Joel Grey, Kevin McCarthy, Harvey Keitel, Allan Nicholls, Geraldine Chaplin, John Considine, Burt Lancaster, Robert Doherty, Mike Kaplan, Bert Remson, Bonnie Leaders, Noelle Rogers, Evelyn Lear, Denver Pyle, Frank Kaquits. Eastmancolor. Length 123 min. U.S. 1976.

## QUEENSLAND

John O'Hara

*Queensland* is a nicely confident, sensitively drawn image of working class existence in one of Melbourne's industrial suburbs. It is directed by John Ruane, and was made as a third year student film at Swinburne, on a budget of \$12,000. It runs for 50 minutes, and in spite of the title, it is neither a travelogue, nor a satire on the Sunshine State.

*Queensland* is an ideal in the minds of a ragged collection of characters; it represents

a vague and uncertain chance of escape from depressing and unsatisfying relationships, from monotonous work and dreary pub life.

The film's continuity depends on establishing a mood, suggesting the essentially reactive quality of Doug and Aub's existence.

John Flaus plays the main role, a hulking factory worker called Doug who has broken up with his woman, Marge, and is rooming with an invalid friend, Aub, played by Bob Karl, a seedy remnant, decked out in a ruinous overcoat, squeezing a little nourishment from a tomato sauce sandwich. He is a thin and liquid accompaniment to John Flaus' performance: largely inarticulate, moodily withdrawn, slouching, but still capable of unexpected enthusiasm. His acting suggests momentarily the kind of physical strength and brooding quality of Gene Hackman, although Flaus appears to have resigned himself to the role rather than worked it out.

The narrative proceeds in fits and starts; the scripting is understated although there is a limit to how much you can say about people through repeated shots of bums easing onto pub chairs. And it is a little confusing earlier on to see Marge running across a busy street and going off with her new boyfriend. All we have to identify her is a fragment of voice-over conversation at the beginning of the film.

But the city is used effectively to create a mood of vaguely insistent anxiety that depends on the greyness and dreariness of the streets and pubs and factories — particularly on the color contrasts of slate-colored streets, the off-red of weathered bricks and the smoke-blue light inside the factory. The opening sequence sets up the factory interior in three shots, cuts to Aub standing miserably beside stacks of packing material, then to the suburban landscape outside, distorted by the shapes of steel housing moulded to industrial processes.

A detached and indirect focus on the two workers is nicely suggested in sequences like the shot along a railway line as an electric train winds towards a bridge, and the camera tilts to show Doug and Aub walking beneath it, then moves into close-up. The best scenes are often those in which nothing much happens: like the long tracking shot along a street at night, as three workers are returning broke from the dogs, and their morose conversation is punctuated by the desolate sound of an empty beer can skittering across the footpath.

Some of the scenes have a kind of pre-set quality, as though everything were arranged and just waiting for the actors to appear. As Doug and Aub walk into a pub they are enthusiastically greeted by a fellow worker

who lifts his cue right on time. Drinks appear to be standing for them at the bar, and the following sequence of events seems to be arranged in order to demonstrate something of the apparently spontaneous character of social life in the public bar. And yet, at other moments in the film, there are more lingering scenes of Doug and Aub drinking, endlessly smoking, often in silence.

Perhaps the budget imposed restrictions that tend to create this odd sense that the film is too long and too short. This feeling is intensified by sudden changes from day to night. You tend to remember moments in the film, like a shot of John Flaus lying in bed reading a newspaper, sipping beer and generally just hanging on. Or Marge lying in bed and staring at the camera, while Doug expounds his plans to go to Queensland.

This episodic or even fragmented quality about the film is due partly to changes in sound and light from one scene to another, as though there hasn't been time to match things up exactly; and partly due to unexpected changes in the camera's perspective on the action. For example, the close-up of Doug at the dogs, staring at Marge, who is there with her boyfriend, isn't particularly effective and even appears disconcerting.

By this time, the film has established its own style; its own detached and sympathetic attempt to represent these individuals within their grimy and depressive living conditions. It is too difficult to change the focus suddenly and make it appear as though we are interpreting events from Doug's point of view.

By the end of the film, Ruane has completely re-established the distance between the camera and the feelings of the main characters. We look down on Doug, stuttering off in an old beaten-up Holden, that won't make it to the end of the street much less Queensland. The camera rises above the street in a long dolly shot of the car, then a slow pan around the city suburb, to leave the audience with a final image of indifference and futility. But the shot doesn't seem to be added on or abstracted at all, because of the small and absurd drama that has just preceded it of getting the old car to go.

Perhaps one of the most impressive things about the film is this relation of detailed sequences to simple, single shots that seem to summarize the condition of hopelessness and frustration of the two main characters.

**QUEENSLAND** Directed by John Ruane. Produced by Chris Fitchett. Screenplay by John Ruane, Ellery Ryan. Production Company, Film Noir. Director of Photography, Ellery Ryan. Edited by Mark Norfolk. Sound by Brett Southwick. Cast: John Flaus, Bob Karl, Alison Bird, Tom Broadbridge, Jack Mobbs, Gary Metcalf, Les Carter, Patricia Condon. Eastmancolor. Length 50 min. Australia. 1975.



Doug (John Flaus) and Aub (Bob Karl) in John Ruane's *Queensland*.

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## LIPSTICK

Meaghan Morris.

One of the most hideous characteristics of contemporary commercial cinema is the increasingly violent and callous banality of its portrayal of rape. It is not simply that the old clichés continue, which they do: for many filmmakers rape remains a simple and ritualized phenomenon. Either a shocking, but liberating experience, or a deed which is really rather nasty and brutish, but short.

In either utterly monstrous view, the brevity of the business is the essential element; a chase, a few jerks and groans, a bit of a bash, and it's all over. Not, finally, all that serious. At least for healthy, natural women.

Such attitudes have quite a history; but what makes the current cinematic rape so sickening is the way graphic close-ups of the violence are combined with photographic techniques manifestly borrowed from the pornographic film. We get tantalizing flickers of beautiful thigh and flawless flesh, open mouths and ambiguous cries and moans - all in all, a general invitation to share a little in the excitement.

This kind of rape sequence has become a fairly predictable element in most frontiersy sorts of films. So much so that its calculated absence, as from *The Wind and the Lion* for example, amounts to a kind of aesthetic assertion, of mild political resonance, that romance is still possible along with classic and heroic manly valor.

In general, and particularly in westerns, rape is appearing with increasing frequency, as either an indispensable narrative element, or as a sign of the times in films derivative of *Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid*.

In fact, this seems to be symptomatic not of some new vengefulness towards women, but of a certain instability verging on exhaustion of imagination in the construction of what should be classically masculine roles - with the rape scene being some kind of frenzied test of character for the male.

A striking example is *The Last Hard Men*. The rape sequence is very nasty - loving and detailed. And we have, as a soothing bonus - a very satisfying murder of the rapists. The film's real problem, though, is the character played by James Coburn (author, but not executor of the rape), who should, by rights, be the traditional killingly sexy villain, but who becomes such a silly parody of machismo evil that one passes very quickly from horror to hilarity.

One significant exception is the rape scene in *Death Wish*. It is horrifying without being the slightest bit titillating - the girl's body being photographed as skinny and vulnerable and rather fishy white. For this to be possible, it seems, we need the context of a monumentally fascist film - and the correspondingly stable masculine character achieved by Bronson - its main purpose being to teach us to defend ourselves against the poor and the black.

Thus, I saw the posters for Lamont Johnson's *Lipstick* blazing away, "Rape can turn a cover girl into a killer", with some trepidation. It turned out to be a straightforward attempt to depict the horrors of rape, not just as a long, agonizing but finite event, but as a process which goes on and on afterwards for the victim, from police questioning and personal persecution to the humiliations of the trial, being abused and disbelieved, and to the destruction of the woman's existence.

*Lipstick* also turned out to be, most unfortunately, a heavy and clumsy failure for some rather interesting reasons.

The narrative is basically pre-empted by the poster. Chris McCormick (Margaux Hemingway) is "the hottest model in the country", currently engaged on a series of lipstick advertisements. She lives with her young sister Kathy (Mariel Hemingway); their brother is a priest in the country. Kathy



Margaux Hemingway (right) playing the hottest model in the country, and her real sister Mariel playing Kathy in *Lipstick*.

has a crush on her music teacher from her (Catholic) school. She wants Chris to hear his music, perhaps to help him with her contacts, and so she brings Mr Stewart (Chris Sarandon) to a filming session where Chris, as part of her job, is posing nearly naked.

The time is not right for music, but Chris, being a sweet and simple girl, invites him vaguely to bring it round sometime. He does; she gets very restless, since his music is experimental cacophony. When a call comes from her lover Steve, she takes it through to the bedroom.

This "rejection" tips Mr Stewart over the edge; he follows her in and rapes her violently, after tying her to the bed. The moment after he finishes, and they are both lying-quiet and exhausted though for rather different reasons, Kathy comes home and sees them. Since all is still, she misunderstands the situation and goes rather upset to her room.

Stewart leaves, tossing off the line, "Don't do this with anyone else". Chris then stumbles to Kathy's room. The moment Kathy understands, the second phase of police and press begins.

Anne Bancroft plays the prosecutor (Carla), who supports Chris in her decision to go through with the trial when all the men in her entourage decide that it might not be good publicity for the hottest model in the country. They fail to get a conviction, because of photos produced in court of Chris half naked and looking lascivious with her lipstick, and because of cross-examination of Kathy which reveals that she had thought for those few moments she had simply seen Chris and Mr Stewart together after a *Story of O* session.

Stewart is acquitted and reinstated, the distraught Chris tries unsuccessfully to go on working. One day during her last session Mr Stewart coincidentally catches Kathy wandering in the deserted building above, and rapes her too. Chris takes a handy rifle and shoots him. The film closes with a brief speech by defence lawyer Anne Bancroft and an acquittal for an empty-faced Chris.

There are a lot of good things in the film, as well as its obvious good intentions. Curiously - and rather unnervingly since it is, after all, Margaux Hemingway playing the hottest model in the country, and her real sister Mariel playing Kathy - *Lipstick* succeeds best as a cinematic essay on fashion photography and the process by which it exploits female sexuality. Particularly in the beginning, there is some very elegant filming

of photographic sessions and its paraphernalia of mirrors and lighting; and some effective sliding between the frame of the film and the borders of a fashion poster or ad.

This works in very well with the narrative theme of the gap between the person and the model's role: the photograph being a kind of abstraction from a context, a single moment frozen and enlarged to a permanency which can be damning once the moment is misunderstood. This is obviously the case with the photos of Chris brought into court; but more subtly, with the problem of the meaning of Kathy's glimpse of the couple on the bed, which we too have seen, and, yes, it might very well have been mistaken for a frame from *The Story of O*.

There is the photo of their priest - brother, placed in Chris's bedroom among photos of male film star acquaintances, which Stewart, misunderstanding instantly, smashes saying, "You fuck priests, too?"

This concentration on photography supports very well the particular scene in the courtroom that shows how, even when there are laws to the contrary, a woman's sexual history can be a decisive if superbly irrelevant element in a rape trial. Chris admits to having fantasies of oral sex, and sometimes of bondage, to achieve the dreamy erotic look so vital for the lipstick photographs.

In the jury's mind, two distinctions are obliterated in seconds: not only the distance between fantasy and the real, but most important, between the real voluntary and the utterly involuntary. When Stewart says with convincing naivety, "She wanted this violence", the illogical train of thought "likes oral sex . . . thinks about bondage . . . must have wanted to be raped", takes over completely.

In this respect, it is dramatically effective to have the model, society's ideal woman, judged perverse and degraded; a hypocritical murmur of disbelief at the patently obvious runs through the court when Chris insists that she sells lipstick to women, not to men, with her poses, and that she gets such work because, "I'm supposed to look like what every woman wants to look like".

The actual rape sequences themselves are well done, in that the images come from horror films for a change, rather than pornography. Stewart wields a piece of broken glass to make Chris look at her distorted face with lipstick smeared round her mouth; and later he cuts her free with a nasty looking knife, underlining the fear of mutilation

or death that can produce acquiescence though not consent.

He catches Kathy after a prolonged and classic chase through glass corridors, at the end of which her screams simply merge, reminiscent of murders in certain train films, with the noise from the studio below.

So, given the current fetish for trivialized or vicious versions of rape in the macho cinema, it is a great shame that *Lipstick* also fails to treat the subject in a convincing and intelligent way. There is a certain heavy-handedness in the scripting which leads Anne Bancroft to rattle off, in one particularly bad patch, a whole list of statistics and facts about rape in the U.S., with the disconcertingly glassy stare of one desperately reciting a memorized tract; but that sequence fails through earnestness, rather than something more serious. The something more serious seems to come through in the characterization (of which there is really very little) and in the whole concept of the narrative. Stewart, to begin with, is a psychopath - here the film draws far too much on horror films to be convincing as a film about the general phenomenon of rape. Most rapists are not, at least in the generally accepted sense of that term, psychopaths. This presentation of Stewart immediately puts the events of the film in the "extreme and infrequent" category.

There is the whole question of throwaway lines about Catholic education. Maybe it is repressive, but at the same time we are made to feel that it is somehow a good thing about Chris that she has a priest for a brother. Then, even if she is beautiful and sexy and likes thinking about oral sex, she is devout; we know this because we see her praying in a bucolic church. She is also wearing white and has just had a shower before the rape.

Worst of all though, is the rape of the little sister. It's not that such things don't happen in real life, but artistically this is pure and self-defeating melodrama. And it's not that the film stops short at a message which says get'em all under lock and key quick or see what will happen - though this is disturbing since it's lousy preventative medicine. But it's rather that the rape of the 14 year old virgin acts in the film to make what Stewart had done worse. It is as though the film needed to add an absolutely unequivocal example.

Even though Kathy is presented as being attracted sexually by Stewart in a youthful sort of way, she is unambiguously innocent in a way that Chris cannot be; as though, in spite of all protests to the contrary, the rape of the hottest model in the country might not be bad enough in itself.

*Lipstick* is a moral tale which proceeds inevitably to its essential statement, a quotation from Clarence Darrow, "The failure of justice may be more damning to society than crime itself..." (The film is sponsored by the National Organization for the Prevention of Rape and Assault. I know nothing of the organization or its policies, but I would hazard a guess to their views on law and order).

Even if one forgets the highly dubious implications of this statement, *Lipstick* is a moral tale with a fatal and revealing contradiction in its own terms; since all this jumble of psychopaths and priests and violated little sisters amounts definitely, if unconsciously, to an element excusing the victim. And that, it seems to me, is inexcusable.

**LIPSTICK** Directed by Lamont Johnson. Distributed by C.I.C. Produced by Freddie Fields. Screenplay by David Rayfiel. Production Company, Dino De Laurentiis Corporation. Director of Photography, Bill Butler. Edited by Marion Rothman. Music by Michel Polnareff. Set Decoration by Don Feld. Sound by Richard Portman, Robert Post. Cast: Margaux Hemingway, Chris Sarandon, Anne Bancroft, Perry King, Robin Gammell, John Bennett Perry, Mariel Hemingway, Francesco, Meg Wylie, Inga Swenson, Lauren Jones, Bill Burns. Technicolor. Length 90 min. U.S. 1976.

## STORM BOY

Noel Purdon

*Storm Boy* is being launched by the South Australian Film Corporation simultaneously with the release of the special Rigby film edition of Colin Thiele's novel and a Film Study Centre kit. In other words, South Australian story, production, locations and education. Therefore, for a South Australian reviewer like myself to criticize the film too harshly would be the equivalent of kicking a pelican in the teeth — which is the exact opposite of what the film is about.

The story is simple: boy meets pelican, boy loves pelican, boy finds new pelican. Pelicans turn out to be endearing creatures who will guarantee the film's success, although a plan to have them strolling elegantly in the foyer at the preview had to be dropped when the birds' wild ways asserted themselves. They are not disappointing in the film, however: clean, odd, beautiful, they perform with an ungainly grace that is a credit to their trainer Gordon Nobel, while as their friend Mike (Greg Rowe) avoids the rampant cuteness of Disney animal kids and lends *Storm Boy* a sensitive and intelligent young face.

*Storm Boy* lives with his father Hideaway Tom (Peter Cummins), in a humpy between the ocean and the flat, shallow waters of the Coorong. In his efforts to raise a trio of orphaned baby pelicans, the boy is aided by an Aboriginal, Fingerbone (Gulpilil), who also joins him in expeditions designed to protect the birdlife of the Coorong against hunters and dune buggy drivers.

The boy's father, initially opposed to the pelican-raising exercise, is finally won over and trains one of the birds to carry fishing lines out to sea, with the result that when a fishing boat founders off the beach, the pelican is able to take a life line out to the occupants. Not long after, however, the bird is killed by hunters on the Coorong and the boy has to come to terms both with his first experience of death and with the possibility of leaving home to begin his education.

Like its baby pelicans, the film has all sorts of fresh and promising qualities. Geoff Burton's photography, full of air and light, makes considerable use of low and wide angle in the exteriors, giving the winter land and seascapes an almost surreal space and presence. Some fine dissolving pans over time-layered cliffs are beautifully complemented by glowing shots of opal skies, pearl beaches, iris rainbows in a thundery heaven; and a tellingly ominous gloom is achieved in the sequence of two boats putting out from Goolura in the evening light.

The values projected in the film will find a ready response in a lot of kids. A strong conservationist stance is explicit in the anti-gun

Storm Boy (Greg Rowe) and Fingerbone (Gulpilil) in *Storm Boy*.

and anti-car scenes, and implicit in the disapproving shots of beer cans casually thrown away. Animals and birds are seen as both autonomous and deserving of protection.

Particularly impressive is the non-patronization of the Aboriginal character Fingerbone. He emerges, indeed, as the presiding intelligence within the wild landscape, and Gulpilil, in his most mature and realistic performance so far, brings real insight and subtlety to the part. *Storm Boy* should go far towards establishing his international reputation as a genuine actor rather than merely an available black face to be presented either as a cipher or as a focus for liberal reverence.

Released as it is in time for the school holidays, and aimed at the family market, *Storm Boy* is a well-made illustration of the extent to which SAFC thinking is a reflection of current Adelaide culture. The vision and skills brought to bear in the film are not adventurous, but rather are tailored to a conventionalized notion of product-packaging. The pleasant score by Michael Carlos ties it all neatly together, ready for

the Christmas stocking.

It is precisely this lack of adventurousness that gives point to the cynical protest that, for a children's film, *Storm Boy* has far too little sex and violence. The style is too tame, too clean, too neat: the Coorong is a thousand times more strange and full of moods than the film manages to convey, and even the shipwreck and rescue look too easy, and the sort of thing a boy might get mixed up in if it were raining and he'd finished his homework.

The film relies too much on the right gesture, the good intention; all the signs are there but, except in the performance of Gulpilil, they are not given any depth, not illuminated by any inner understanding. Individual shots are superbly composed and the editing is sharp, but the direction everywhere betrays the touch of a man who is a good employee but no poet. The corporation needs the vision of someone who is a forceful *auteur* in his own right; perhaps the imminent production of Peter Weir's *The Last Wave*, again featuring Gulpilil in a lead role, will fill this gap.

The study-kit, too, warrants attention. It contains videotape interviews with the crew, portions of the script, stills and production plots, and is soon to be supplemented by a Film School documentary on the actual shooting. In contrast with the worthless promotion bumph foisted on us by American companies, it provides a genuine and much-needed insight into the process of filmmaking.

**STORM BOY** Directed by Henri Safran. Distributed by South Australian Film Corporation. Produced by Matt Carroll. Associate Producer, Jane Scott. Screenplay by Sonia Borg. From the story by Colin Thiele. Production Company, South Australian Film Corporation. Director of Photography, Geoff Burton. Edited by G. Turney-Smith. Music by Michael Carlos. Art Direction by David Copping. Sound by Ken Hammond. Cast: Peter Cummins, Greg Rowe, David Gulpilil, Judy Dick, Tony Allison, Michael Moody, Graham Dow, Frank Foster-Brown, Eric Mack, Michael Caulfield, Paul Smith, Hedley Cullen. Length 87 min. Australia. 1976.



Storm Boy and pelican: avoiding the rampant cuteness of Disney.



Peter Cummins (right) as Storm Boy's father Hideaway Tom.





## A WOMAN UNDER THE INFLUENCE

John Tittensor

Like *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, to which it bears no other resemblance whatsoever, John Cassavetes' *A Woman Under the Influence* is a well-intentioned half-truth about mental illness. This is not to say that it is dishonest or evasive in relation to the issues implicit in its material, but rather that it never quite succeeds in grasping what those issues are, or in crystallizing them in a way that will convey their full force to an audience.

It is a regrettable truth that mental illness has evolved, over the past 20 years or so, into a thoroughly fashionable preoccupation. In the process it has been laid open to all kinds of exploitation and vulgarization. The crack-up, typically of an emotionally maltreated woman or a hypersensitive male intellectual, has become a staple both of modern fiction and of the mythology of certain excessively self-regarding social groups.

Translated into cinematic terms the syndrome provides a gamut of experience ranging from the shattering power of Malle's *Le Feu Follet*, to the maudering narcissism of *The Red Desert*. Neither of these films, of course, was 'commercial' in the manner of *Cuckoo's Nest*. What Forman gave us was in reality two films in one: the first with some telling points to make, albeit in a somewhat simplistic way, about contemporary society as it reveals itself in its treatment of an out-cast minority; the second little better than a black hats versus white hats flick designed (successfully) to get the audience standing on their seats.

The Academy Awards *Cuckoo's Nest* received were, as much as anything, an acknowledgement of its success in developing this highly saleable form of doublespeak.

Director John Cassavetes, on the other hand, makes it clear from the beginning of *A Woman Under the Influence* that he is attempting a moral and intellectual stance that is genuinely individual and totally honest; that he is concerned with truth and not with image-making; and that the reality he is striving to express is aimed at the minds,



John Cassavetes' *A Woman Under the Influence*, aimed at the minds, rather than simply at the hearts and pockets. Above: Mabel (Gena Rowlands) and Nick (Peter Falk).

rather than simply at the hearts and pockets, of the audience. He is working, in other words — and at considerable personal sacrifice — towards a cinema untainted by the shoddy, the fashionable or the commercial.

This directorial position, honest, anti-didactic, compassionate yet tough-minded, would seem the ideal complement to the film's subject-matter; why is it, then, that *A Woman Under the Influence* is in so many ways such a radically unsatisfying piece of work?

Perhaps its greatest single drawback stems from Cassavetes' tendency to handle his material in an overly schematic way, a tendency the opening portion of the film illustrates all too well: foreman Nick Longhetti (Peter Falk) is a number one good guy to his mixed black-Italian crew, but not so to wife Mabel (Gena Rowlands), who is going off her rocker in the suburbs while he stays out working overtime. She prowls the house making the stifled, feebly aggressive noises of a long-caged animal, then goes out to a bar, has a single giant drink, at once becomes very drunk and picks up a nice, very stupid man to spend the night with.

In the morning her bizarre behavior — she keeps addressing him by her husband's name — quickly drives her lover from the

house. Soon after, Nick arrives with his workmates, cheerfully expecting that she will feed and entertain them all; which she does, or attempts to do, her behavior becoming progressively odder until finally they leave in embarrassment.

The rest of the film chronicles a decline culminating in her committal to, and ultimate release from an asylum.

This opening sequence is all very well as it stands, which is to say that it is an effective tableau of a suburban housewife exhibiting signs of fairly acute instability. The problem, however, is that one is clearly intended to draw all sorts of conclusions about Mabel and the source of her neuroses from this initial sequence, when the basis for such conclusions simply is not provided.

There is no adequate context in which to assess the validity of her responses. Nor does the remainder of the film establish such a context, except, once again, in a highly schematic way: one scene to illustrate the husband's thoughtlessness, another to point up the well-meaning obtuseness of the medical profession, another to lay bare the uncomprehending and destructive stupidity of Nick and Mabel's combined families.

One result of this compartmental approach is a lack of continuity and of true coherence, so that too often Mabel's behavior seems no more than an arbitrary response to an arbitrarily constructed situation.

This specific failing can be traced back to the very beginning of the film, for not even then do we see Mabel looking anything like any kind of balanced person.

The uncharitable might argue that it's difficult to appear completely sane once you have acquired an Actor's Studio set of mannerisms, but Mabel's twitching, gesturing and grimacing do create the immediate impression that she is well set on her downwards course. And this, given the generally Laingian line of the film's thinking, is a major error of judgement: a crack-up is part of a continuum and cannot simply be dumped holus-bolus in the audience's lap, to be clarified by the sketching in of, as it were, posthumous clichés.

Our problem in looking at the wreckage that is Mabel is that we have no idea of what we have lost, or of what she might yet regain.

These basic shortcomings are in no way compensated for by the 'natural', i.e. highly mannered, performances of the two principals, by the appallingly gauche handling of the child actors, by microphones droppng into shot or by one of the most blatantly forced 'optimistic' endings within living memory.

There are, on the other hand, moments of real power: a scene in which Nick savagely

strikes Mabel in front of a neighbor and a group of children has all the force of an unheralded thunderclap. And the film's high point, in its creation of unrelieved, claustrophobic terror, is a prolonged scene during which the alternately raving and pleading Mabel is pursued around the living room by her husband and the family doctor, the latter armed with a syringe, in a macabre dance of death that is mercilessly whipped on by Nick's mother, the icily brilliant Katherine Cassavetes.

Such moments, regrettably, are not many. Taken as a whole *A Woman Under the Influence* is clumsy, tedious and lacking in real insight, providing an object lesson on the inability of unaided good intentions to create a work of art.

## A WOMAN UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Directed by John Cassavetes. Distributed by Filmways. Produced by Sam Shaw. Screenplay by John Cassavetes. Production Company, Faces International Films. Director of Photography, Mitch Breit. Edited by Elizabeth Bergeron, David Armstrong, Sheila Viselstein. Music by Bo Harwood. Sound by Nick Spaulding. Cast: Peter Falk, Gena Rowlands, Matthew Cassel, Matthew Laborteaux, Christina Grisanti, Katherine Cassavetes, Lady Rowlands, Fred Draper, O.G. Dunn, Mario Gallo, Eddie Shaw, Angelo Grisanti. Length 146 min. U.S. 1974.

## THE STORY OF ADELE H

Tom Ryan

It is tempting to see Francois Truffaut's most recent film released in Australia as a distant relative of Max Ophuls' 1948 film, *Letter From An Unknown Woman*. Indeed, the features of the films have much in common. If one were to abstract a subject from both, it would be "the romantic imagination" and the problem of perceiving oneself in relation to the rest of the world.

The narrative in the Ophuls film, adapted from a novelette of the same name by Stefan Zweig and set in nineteenth century Vienna, is drawn largely from the letter written by the dangerously ill Lisa (Joan Fontaine) to Stefan (Louis Jourdan), a concert pianist. She had fallen in love with Stefan when she was a young girl, and her brief encounter had led to a life-long infatuation.

*The Story of Adele H (L'Histoire D'Adele H)* is adapted from the writings of Victor Hugo's estranged daughter, Adele (Isabelle Adjani), and, beginning in 1863, records her efforts to rejuvenate her faded relationship with a British soldier, Lt. Pinson (Bruce Robinson), now stationed in Halifax, Nova Scotia, whence she goes to discover "the new world". The two films are primarily concerned with their females in terms of their



Adele H. tirelessly records her efforts to rejuvenate a faded relationship with a British soldier.

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Adele assumes a disguise in a furtive attempt to speak to Lieutenant Pinson.

obsessions, their inability to recognize that their quests for liberation through love have provided the bars for their common prison. Besieged by the fact of the absence of the object of their desires, both women reconstruct their experiences in written form, pouring out their frustrated passions into the private safety of the pages that accept their words.

In the two films, the men who deny these women are presented without condemnation. Stefan and Pinson are frequenters of various boudoirs as they move from place to place, their journeys serving to suggest sympathetically the instability of their lives, as well as their evasion of obligation — though Stefan is finally shown as recognizing his limitations as he completes the letter Lisa had written to him, and Pinson is married when we last see him in Barbados. But in neither case are we invited to pass easy moral judgements, their irresponsibility being set against their personal irrelevance to the romantic fantasies of the two women.

In fact, in *The Story of Adele H*, we scarcely see enough of Pinson to establish any firm view.

His appearances are generally limited to those scenes in which he is faced by a pathetic, pleading Adele, with whom he is remarkably tolerant, or in which he is faced with the consequences of her pursuits.

Both Ophuls and Truffaut make use of different visual styles to distance their audiences from their heroines and from the dramas in which they exist. In *Letter From An Unknown Woman* the complex patterns of tracking and panning movements and the cycles of repetition work to evoke the familiar tension between mankind's creation of its own destiny (the track or pan 'following' Lisa to where she chooses to go) and the sense that Fate has it already planned (the movements 'preceding' Lisa, as if leading her to a situation already designated).

In *The Story of Adele H*, the persistent use of close-ups and of restricted sets, and the confined camera movements, combined with the dominant images of a darkness broken only by the glow of lamps or lanterns, are ex-

pressive of the limitations of Adele's consciousness.

There are exceptions to this aspect of Truffaut's style in the film: the mechanical, lengthy and mobile take which observes, from outside, the activity at the party to which a disguised Adele goes to find Pinson; the fragmented tracking movements which follow Adele's passage around a sunlit Barbados in the film's closing moments. But these simply provide an alternative commentary on the boundaries which have been laid for and by Adele's life.

The daughter of an exiled writer committed to the liberation of the oppressed, and an intruder in Nova Scotia, which is occupied by the British military, sympathetic to the cause of the South during the American Civil War, Adele's actions are necessarily limited to those of a particular design. And the explosion of light into the film, at a point where her descent into madness is almost complete, provides an ironic observation on the symbolic light in the darkness to which she has been oblivious throughout. So irrelevant to her now is the person of Pinson, that she even fails to recognize him when he approaches her in the street.

So, rather than engaging in Adele's romantic quest, the viewer is thrust outside it, forced to see the irony that her attempt to escape the sense of enclosure she has experienced as the daughter of Victor Hugo has simply led her to another form of entrapment. His disillusionment, articulated in his paradoxical, "I see a dark light", on his death-bed, has found its human embodiment in his daughter's distress.

Against the perceptions of characters in the film about Adele — for the lame bookseller, she provides a romantic ideal; to her kindly landlady, she is "refined and well-educated, and so pretty"; for the doctor who tends her and discovers her identity, she is a contact with greatness — we are required to view her as a hopeless case, not just refusing to recognise Pinson's rejection of her, but unable to do so, creating in her letters to herself a fabric woven of false dreams: "He

has reproached me for my violence. When we are reunited, I shall win him over with my gentleness." She constantly projects herself into alternative roles. Subconsciously (in her recurring nightmare), and then consciously (in a moment of stress, to the little boy in the telegraph office), she identifies herself with her sister, Leopoldine, who had drowned in a boating accident, her husband's efforts to save her leading to his death.

She plays the submissive female and the vixen in order to sway Pinson, but finally her inability to confront her reality leads her into what could be described as a catatonic schizophrenia.

Truffaut's method differs from that of Ophuls in the nature of the distance at which the audience is placed. In *Letter From An Unknown Woman*, a classic Hollywood melodrama, we are invited to share Lisa's romantic yearnings, though at the same time we are forced to recognize them for what they are.

In *The Story of Adele H*, in spite of Nestor Almendros' images which recall the French paintings of the time, in spite of Isabelle Adjani's youthful beauty (which is, conventionally, that of the romantic heroine), and in spite of the appealing melancholy score composed by Maurice Jaubert, it is difficult for an audience to find anything but a detached sympathy for Adele. Truffaut's depiction of her behavior has at least as much in common with farce as it does with melodrama, and perhaps a comparison with Flaubert (especially with *Madame Bovary*), would be appropriate.

Finally, it is necessary to see *The Story of Adele H* in the context of Truffaut's responses to the Hollywood cinema, which has played such an important part in his formation as a filmmaker, as it did for so many of the so-called 'nouvelle vague'. Beyond the more obvious connections in his films — his free references to genre and the, often awkward, homages to filmmakers he has admired — there is the attempt to break free from the chains of that Hollywood tradition and to find his own forms. In fact in 1962 Truffaut remarked: "... as long as one considers the cinema as a popular art — and we all do as we were brought up on the American cinema — then we can go off on another tack; we can discipline our work so that it becomes complex and has more than one layer of meaning ..."

Such a goal was apparent as early as his second feature, *Tirez Sur La Pianiste* (1960) with its idiosyncratic treatment of the gangster/underworld conventions, and is readily located in his anti-melodramatic treatment of the melodramatic material of *Jules et Jim* (1961) and *Une Belle Fille Comme Moi* (1974) — films which have much in common with *The Story of Adele H*, taking as their centre the study of a, or arguably the, female consciousness and its reception of male-oriented identities.

It is here, in Truffaut's critical explorations of form, that the key to the direction his films are taking can be found. And there is considerable irony in this fact, that one now has to look to Europe to find the heritage which Hollywood has left to the world of cinema.

**THE STORY OF ADELE H** Directed by Francois Truffaut. Distributed by Cinema Center Group. Executive Producers, Marcel Berbert, Claude Miller. Screenplay by Francois Truffaut, Jean Gruault, Suzanne Schiffman, with the collaboration of Frances V. Guille, editor of *The Diary of Adele Hugo*. Production Company, Les Films du Carrosse — Les Productions Artistes Associes. Director of Photography, Nestor Almendros. Edited by Yann Dedet, Martine Baraque, Jean Gargonne, Michele Nerry, Muriel Zeleny. Music by Maurice Jaubert. Art Direction by Jean-Pierre Kohut-Svelko. Sound by Jean-Pierre Ruh, Michel Laurent. Cast: Isabelle Adjani, Bruce Robinson, Sylvia Marriott, Reubin Dorey, Joseph Blatchley, M. White, Carl Hawthell, Ivry Gitlis, Sir Cecil de Sausmarez, Sir Raymond Falia, Roger Martin, Mme Louise, Jean-Pierre Leursse, Francois Truffaut. Metrocolor. Length 97 min. France. 1975.

## REVIEWED NEXT ISSUE



Eliza Fraser



Promised Woman



Deathcheaters



Raw Deal



The Singer and the Dancer

Plus  
Summer of Secrets  
Break of Day

## Emile De Antonio

*Continued from P. 205*

A left wing historian once said that a political party isn't really alive until it starts to split, which is really what criticism/self-criticism is about. The Weather Underground has achieved a kind of unity because it has been able to take critical stands about its positions. It saw what was wrong in the days of the townhouse. Not that the townhouse was wrong. That was sad, that wasn't wrong. But they've seen how their attitudes were wrong. Also the Days of Rage — the Days of Rage were correct, but the attitudes were wrong. All of their mistakes, though, are mistakes that you find politically and even dramatically interesting, because they're mistakes of rage and passion instead of self-serving or stupid mistakes.

One thing that makes me happy about the film is that people come up after it and say, "Wow, you made them seem so human and sane," and I say, "Don't be ridiculous, you can't make anybody seem human and sane. They are human and sane." And the fact that they've preserved their humanity while being fugitives in the belly of this great imperial beast is a great tribute to them.

**The Weatherpeople talked about their act of putting their political statement, *Prairie Fire*, together, and how they totally controlled means of production from beginning to end. In the film they couldn't do that and they mention that once it was filmed, it was in your hands. How did you as a collective, including them, feel about that?**

Well, we probably made some errors about which we'll have an opportunity to be self-critical. I know that they're going to review the film in *Osawatimie*. I also know that part of what is in the film that may be incorrect is neither their fault nor our fault, because whenever you make a film or write a book you freeze something in history. Meanwhile a year has gone by and their attitudes and positions have changed as the world changes. So what they said in 1975 when we filmed them, they may view differently today. They may take a critical view of the film, which is fine. We're not against being criticized, we're open for it. We tried to make a film, though, that would reflect what they felt, and yet we had absolute freedom. Neither Mary nor I was doing anything we didn't want to do. We were autonomous, in the same position I said PFOC groups ought to be in. We had to go ahead in the spirit of what we had. I couldn't make a film and show it to somebody everyday and say is this what you want? Neither could Mary, and I don't think they wanted that.

**Earlier you mentioned that your cameraperson was never truly a part**

**of the collective. In the often-used mirror shot, it seemed to me that the dominant image in the frame was the cameraman and the camera of Hollywood, and that the Weatherpeople were huddled together at the bottom of the frame, photographed so that we appear to be looking down on them. This seemed a contradiction in form and content and I wonder whether you think, first, that this is true, and if so, does it reflect the imperfect nature of your collective?**

That particular imperfection is probably my own, it's not even Haskell's. When Haskell and I first met on this, we talked about how we could do this without putting masks over them, which we both regarded as ridiculous and hostile images: it looks like somebody who robbed your local grocery store. So we tried the scrim, which is the gauze screen, and the idea of the mirror was mine. The first note I had to myself was that we would have a pan across a mirror in which we would be reflected and then come upon them. And we got hung up on that mirror because there were only a certain number of devices we could use. It's also very hard to communicate with the Weather Underground, so when they said to us, "What shall we put in that safe house? What props?" we only got one shot at it and we said, "Make it look something like a place you would live in, and the one thing we would like is a mirror of such and such dimensions."

**What have been the responses of audiences so far?**

The audience response has been overwhelmingly positive. A lot of the negative criticism we've had has come from sectarian left groups. Some of this is understandable because they feel: "Why aren't we in a film that's being played in theatres?" What's not understandable is criticism by another group that's into armed propaganda which says: "Ah, the Weather Underground, they're too laid back. We've done more bombing in the past six months than they've done in the past six and a half years." It makes it sound like a contest in bombing which is a very dangerous and boring idea at the same time.

But the thing that staggers Mary and me is that ordinary audiences are questioning. They want to know more. They want to find out, and that's exactly what we were hoping for. We're also getting a lot of people who were in the peace movement and some who were in radical fringes of the peace movement, and then copped out to go to medical school or law school, or were into drugs or something else. They see the film and it makes them unhappy, and guilty, but also happy, because they think of what they once did and that maybe they can try to get it back together once more. Those are the effects we

hoped for. Anytime we've been at the film, people have clapped at the end, which you don't usually do at a film. This indicates not that the film is that good, but that there's real support for the Weatherpeople all over the country.

**What's been the level of government harassment around the film, and do you think it's tied in, for example, with the current harassment of TriContinental Films?\***

The government harassment of everything is part of the same package, which is to suppress every effective expression of the left. That history over the past 25 years can be written in terms of murder: Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Fred Hampton . . . and that's major harassment, being killed. But even when the Socialist Workers' Party started becoming slightly effective with their newspaper, for example, they had the whole harassment — FBI breaking into their offices, beating up people.

The kind of harassment that filmmakers or artists get, whether it's TriContinental or ourselves, is minor, because the arts are always on the fringe. They're not in the middle of the struggle. They should be, perhaps, but they're not. A film is not Bernardine Dohrn or Malcolm X, no matter how good it is. But on the other hand I think all people in the media on the left should band together. This is what I tried to start when we were harassed out here in Los Angeles, and when we won. I tried to form a committee just on the First Amendment in film, because as long as it's broad it doesn't mean anything. If you say, "I'm in favor of the First Amendment which guarantees freedom of expression," well great, there isn't anybody on the street, including the cop, who wouldn't sign that. Governor Brown would sign it. But when you say, "I believe in the right of these people to make any film they want, and specifically a film about the Weather Underground," and sign that, it's a good narrow base. It really puts the government on the spot.

The same thing is true of TriContinental Films. As the Cuban films and Third World films became seen and were received by more and more people, TriCon began being harassed by the government. It's when they're afraid that you're going to be heard that they step on you. Everybody has to support TriContinental. The government will get scared. Believe it or not, the government is scared of Warren Beatty. It sounds mad, but it's true. And if you get 45 Warren Beattys, plus some real radicals to support TriCon, the government's going to have to let up.

\* TriContinental Film Centre distributes Third World films in the U.S. The U.S. government is currently trying to force them to register as a "foreign agent", which the centre claims would destroy their business.

**What is the relationship of progressive media people like yourself to other activists whose primary work is centred in communities or unions, for instance?**

The relationship is to keep in touch and express what they do. As you know, one of the problems with the media — and I hate that word — I'll say one of the problems with film, is that while you're in the world, making a film about the world and people in it, you yourself get drawn out of the world. And what I'm going to do next, for instance, is write a book, which is almost totally isolating. It's a hard position, but it's the most effective thing I can do. It's a book which is going to trace my own history through the CIA and the FBI, and I think it will mean more to more people than my not doing it and doing something else that seems to be more active. Bernardine is a natural political leader and I'm not. Maybe I'm an unnatural filmmaker, but that's what I do, and that's why I'm writing this book — so I can make a film about it.

But at the same time I keep up, and Mary particularly keeps up strong organizational connections with groups like *Prairie Fire*, with certain labor groups, with women's groups, and with groups that spring up from time to time around specific issues. I would do anything for TriContinental, not only because that's my work, but also because it's part of the revolutionary struggle in this country to show people how brilliantly the Cubans, for example, can make films today, which they could never make when we were running the country.

When our third-rate henchmen like Batista and Machado were presidents of Cuba all they could produce were whores and gambling. Now you have a first rate film industry and a revolutionary world dealing with the arts. The FBI, and CIA of this country don't want people to see what the revolution has won in a great many places. That's why they're going after TriContinental. They don't want us to see that we are part of an international majority. We're not a minority. Those of us who are Marxists-Leninists belong to the majority of the world population today. We are a minority here, and I think we can end by saying that you and I both hope that that's what will change. We hope that we will belong to that world majority that seeks to bring justice and openness and economic equality and the true testing of women and men together in fighting for social change. ★

## EMILE DE ANTONIO FILMOGRAPHY

- 1963 *Point of Order*
- 1966 *Rush to Judgement*
- 1969 *In the Year of the Pig*
- 1970 *America is Hard to See*
- 1971 *Millhouse: A White Comedy*
- 1972 *Painters Painting*
- 1975 *Underground*



# Soundtracks

## JERRY GOLDSMITH

Ivan Hutchinson

Los Angeles-born Jerry Goldsmith, whose score is currently contributing to the box-office success of *The Omen*, at present ranks as one of the most hardworking and prolific composers on the international film scene.

Goldsmith majored in music at the University of California, studied with pianist Jakop Gimpel, and learned the basic techniques of film scoring with Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco and Miklos Rozsa. In 1950, he joined the music department of CBS' West Coast division, and did his first work as a composer-conductor for radio programs.

By the end of the 1950s he had written scores for many series, among them *The Twilight Zone* and *Gunsmoke*. But his name first really came to the fore with his work on *Thriller*, the hour-long horror-fantasy series hosted by Boris Karloff. The music, with its stress on dissonance and complex, non-melodic rhythmic passages was often more genuinely disturbing than the scripts of that only moderately successful series.

By the age of 30 he was a name to be reckoned with. And in a country where music is recognized as a major part of successful dramatic programming, his inventiveness and imagination, combined with an ability to work quickly, inevitably brought him to the attention of the film studios.

However, it was not until 1962 that he first gained real notice as a writer of film scores. In that year he scored three films for Universal: an off-beat western, a Rock Hudson melodrama and John Huston's flawed but interesting *Freud*.

The widely differing nature of the subjects may have been indicative of the studio's confidence in him, but it also provided Goldsmith with the opportunity to demonstrate his eclecticism and versatility to the rest of the industry. In taking advantage of this opportunity he revealed both a responsiveness to the needs of film drama and a high level of technical sophistication.

His lush score for *The Spiral Road*, with its Eastern touches, was a long way from the melancholy, haunting and gentle music for *Lonely Are the Brave*, which, in turn differed radically from the atonal approach used in *Freud*. This last was a fully atonal score, the first of at least four written by Goldsmith, and proves, in spite of the opinions of musical purists, that atonality can be used to considerable effect in certain types of film.

Commercial success had so far eluded his film work, but in 1963 the breakthrough came with *Lilies of the Field*, one of six films he scored in that year. Utilizing banjo, strings and negro spiritual, he created an attractive, melodic and ingeniously scored soundtrack that was a joyful adjunct to a slight and overly sentimental film.

He has since arranged four films a year, covering the broadest imaginable range of subjects from westerns through thrillers and comedies to spectacles.

Not all have been good films, but all have benefited from Goldsmith's participation.

A check of the scores available in this country reveals a division of his music into three main types: his "Western" music, which is not restricted solely to westerns; his large scale melodic work, combining complex rhythms and often exotic and plaintive-

sounding string themes; and his atonal writing. In the first category are *Lonely are the Brave* (1962), *Lilies of the Field* (1963), *A Patch of Blue* (1965), *Stagecoach* (1966), *The Trouble with Angels* (1966), *The Flim Flam Man* (1967), *Hour of the Gun* (1967) and *Wild Rovers* (1971).

The second group would comprise *In Harm's Way* (1965), *The Blue Max* (1966) — the score far surpassing the film in interest, *Justine* (1969), and possibly his best score of this type, *Patton* (1970).

The atonal work, *Freud* apart, would include *The Satan Bug* (1965), the brilliantly imaginative and exciting score for *Planet of the Apes* (1968) and *The Illustrated Man* (1969).

As is evident, Goldsmith has worked on some undistinguished films, but without ever writing down to his material. In the case of the inept thriller, *The Satan Bug*, for example, he avoided the predictable jazz-pop clichés and, using a synthesizer to produce a five-note motif in 5/4 time, created a stunning score that made the film infinitely better to listen to than to watch.

Already this year he has scored *The Omen* and *Logan's Run*, with no sign of any deterioration in quality or originality. In *The Omen*, a brilliantly-edited film whose primary aim is a frontal attack on the audience's nervous system, Orff-like Latin chants in praise of Satan are used as a leit-motif, together with chimes, tympani, piano and strings in abundance the voices of the chorus chanting, shouting and swooping to chilling effect. By contrast the more reflective moments of the score have a melancholy quality reminiscent of Elmer Bernstein in quieter mood.

In *Planet of the Apes*, Goldsmith eschewed the use of electronic devices, preferring to utilize unusual timbres from conventional instruments, exotic percussion and serial composition for a symphony orchestra. For *Logan's Run*, his latest venture into science-fiction, he has used all the electronic devices at the disposal of a modern recording studio to produce what is — at least on record, the film not having been released yet — a soundtrack that is a unique aural experience.

His other scores are well represented on disc. *Lilies of the Field* (Epic LN24094), *A Patch of Blue* (Mainstream 56068), and *The Trouble with Angels* (Mainstream 56073) present music that is the best single feature of each of the films in question.

For those who want Goldsmith at his best *Planet of the Apes* (Project 55023), *Patton* (Fox 4208) and *The Blue Max* (Mainstream 56081) are essential. At the time of writing *The Omen* (Tattoo BJL1-1888) and *Logan's Run* (MGM MG-1-5302) are available only on import.

The only dull Goldsmith is to be found in his "jazz" scores for *In Like Flint* or *To Trap a Spy*, where he attempts the idiom of today's pop writers. Here he is competent, but no more so than many others with only a fraction of his ability.

Nonetheless, at his best he is enormously talented, and in a recent series of interviews with well-known film composers, Jerry Goldsmith, who believes that too many American films have too much music written for them, was constantly rated by his contemporaries as among the best — no mean recommendation in a highly competitive field. ★



Jerry Goldsmith: "Too many American films have too much music."



Conducting the score for *Planet of the Apes*.

### STILLS IN THIS ISSUE

#### Special thanks to:

Samuel Z. Arkoff — John Reid, Antony I. Ginnane.  
1900 — Basil Gilbert.  
Persistence of Vision — Gail Pascoe.  
Roman Polanski — Peter Murphy, CIC and Antony I. Ginnane.  
Emile de Antonio — David Roe, AFI and The Sydney Film Festival.  
Jerry Goldsmith — John Reid.

## The Corporations

Continued from P. 236

The other members are:

Mr Graham Burke, managing director of Roadshow Distributors and Village Theatres and a director of Mr Tim Burstall's Melbourne-based company, Hexagon Productions;

Mr Nigel Dick, the managing director of the Victorian Broadcasting Network Ltd., and a director of Crawford Productions;

Mr Clifford Green, who has written scripts for television and feature films, including *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and the ABC series *Power Without Glory*;

Mrs Natalie Miller, who has been associated with the Melbourne Film Festival since its early days. She is an independent film distributor and promoter of overseas and Australian films;

Mr John McLachlan, program manager of ATV0, and formerly film manager and Victorian sales manager of GTV9; and

Mr Frederick Schepisi, writer, producer and director of prize-winning television commercials. He directed the film *Devil's Playground* which received the Australian Film Institute's awards for best Australian film 1976, best script and best director.

At the present time, the Corporation is drawing on the staff facilities of the Victorian Ministry for the Arts. However, in the near future the Corporation will have its own staff and separate office facilities. It is envisaged that the permanent staff will comprise a chief executive, administrator, three project officers and secretarial staff.

The objectives of the Corporation as determined by the Act are:

1. To energetically pursue the policy of encouraging the production in this state of films with high standards of quality. The Corpora-

tion will support as many projects as possible. Economic viability and aesthetic significance will be considered co-jointly and in isolation so that projects supported will fall, from time to time, into three categories:

- (a) Those that have apparent economic viability as well as aesthetic significance;
- (b) Those that have apparent economic viability, but not necessarily, in the opinion of the Corporation, aesthetic significance; and,
- (c) Those that, in the opinion of the Corporation, have little or no apparent economic viability, but do have undoubted aesthetic significance.

### 2. Facilities

To encourage the provision of adequate and up-to-date equipment and facilities for filmmakers in this state. The aim should be to encourage private enterprise to provide such requirements, but the Corporation itself should be prepared to meet the needs as a last resort.

### 3. Production Assistance

To assist filmmakers in a variety of ways, including financial aid ranging from grant to investment, and facilitation aid including technical resources and community facilities.

### 4. Production Co-ordination for Government Departments

To provide services, advice and funds to government departments proposing to use the film medium for promotional or educational purposes.

The Board first met on August 11, 1976, and plans to have meetings every three weeks. It hopes to be as flexible as possible in all areas of its activities.

In the field of script assessing the Corporation has decided not to use outside script assessors, but for the time being make all assessment by members of the Board.

The aim is to assess an application as a total project, with a review of the script as merely one part of the total assessment. There will be no formal application forms, as the Corporation hopes that producers will submit their proposals in the form of scripts along with complete project details.

The Corporation has to date received a number of applications. The first project to be approved is the Phillip Adams production of the film *The Getting of Wisdom*, based on Henry Handel Richardson's novel. In this instance \$50,000 will be invested.

Before the formation of the Corporation, the Victorian Ministry for the Arts invested \$61,000 in *Break of Day*, and \$80,000 in *Raw Deal*.

The Victorian Film Corporation recognizes that it has many mutual interests with the Australian Film Commission and, indeed, other state bodies. Dialogue has already been opened between these various bodies, and the Corporation formally met with the Australian Film Commission in Melbourne on October 25.

In the immediate future the Victorian Film Corporation is looking forward to the appointment of its chief executive, and the acquisition of its own office accommodation. It also aims to set up a number of committees, each aided by a Board member with co-opted members. The specific areas of committee interest will be:

- (1) Production facilities — sound stage, sound-dubbing suite, etc.,
- (2) Educational films, audio-visual cassettes, etc.,
- (3) Film and television scriptwriting, workshops with overseas writers, etc.
- (4) Documentaries, tourism and other film for government departments.
- (5) Policy on — (a) commercial films; (b) non-commercial, experimental films, etc. ★

Continued from P. 241

## RANSOM STODDARD REPLIES

### Paragraphs 4 and 5

Mr Loney well knows — or his solicitors ought to be able to advise him — that under the Act of Parliament which set it up, it is the continuing responsibility of the Trade Practices Commission to oversee, inquire, report on and, where appropriate, initiate action against the indulgences of any industry in those restrictive trade practices set out in the Act.

The fact that the MPDA had applied for clearance of certain practices does not alter the duty of the Commission to be continually inquisitive of the general practices of the film industry and all other industries. Any request of the Commission to separate the clearance applications from the general overview of the Commission under the Act is out of line.

Further, although it appears that the Commission's investigating officer did, without any authority from the Commission, give some undertaking to the Commission, the MPDA ought to have realized that the officer in question had no authority to bind the Commission, and indeed Commissioner Coad points this out in his telex to Dawson Waldron (the MPDA's solicitors) dated July 7, 1976.

### Paragraph 7

The MPDA refers to application C3751. Whether the Queensland Exhibitors' Association requested the additional rejection rights the agreement in question purported to grant is immaterial to the issue of whether Dr. Venturini could endorse any block booking practice, however diluted. (Block booking is the coupling of high grossing and fair grossing films together in the one film hire contract, which is arguably

in breach of Section 45 and Section 47 of the Act). It is easy to understand why the Queensland Association would want further rejection rights. What Dr. Venturini did was to imply they did not go far enough.

Similarly, clearance for application C3752 was refused.

### Paragraph 8

Mr Loney cannot be serious here. Looking, for example, at the Victorian/Tasmanian standard form of contract, Clause 10 provides for the place of exhibition, Clause 11 for the date of exhibition, and Clauses 23 and 42 set out film hire terms. The Schedule also frequently sets out admission prices.

As for the restrictive nature of the agreement, Clause 34, for example, requires the exhibitor to insure the film in his possession with an insurer nominated by the distributor. This is the sort of Clause frequently indicted by the Commission in finance agreements and the like.

As for Mr Jack Graham's comments, it is hard to believe he is serious if he states he is representing exhibitors. Not one word of Dr. Venturini's judgement criticizes exhibitors, except to sympathize with them for their plight.

### Paragraph 10

Mr Loney claims that only one large producer-distributor group has substantial interests in cinema ownership. I take it he means 20th Century-Fox-Hoyts. That, of course, depends on what you mean by 'interests'. Mr Loney's own company CIC, through an affiliate, has substantial interests in City Theatres and Line Drive Ins in WA, the Ascot Theatre in Sydney, and the Bryson in Melbourne. And, of course, Warner Brothers, through their association with Village-Roadshow, have interests in the Village group.

Mr Loney skirts over the franchise agreements which everyone knows exist between MPDA members and exhibitor groups (refer *Cinema Papers*, issues 5 and 6, "Restrictive Trade Practices Legislation and the Film Industry"). As Dr. Venturini says, the film industry, at an exhibition-distribution level, is not a free market in any sense of the word.

### Paragraphs 14 and 15

Mr Loney's views on the development of the local production industry are pure supposition. How the exhibition-distribution-production scene would have developed without Rank and Fox buying up a monopoly is anybody's guess.

Mr Loney suggests that standards of the cinemas owned by independent exhibitors do not rate with those of the combines. How did he rate the Capitol Theatre in Melbourne—formerly an independently booked house for 70mm MGM first-run product, forced almost to the wall after the MGM-BEF merger — before it was saved by entering into an agreement with Village?

It is certainly true the release patterns established over the years have proved most profitable for MPDA members. It is moot whether it has proved as profitable for producers. In fact until the aggressive Village and Dendy groups moved into the national scene in the 60s, the profits of exhibitors, distributors and producers were flagging due to an absence of competition.

### Paragraphs 20-23

In spite of our request, Mr Loney gives only the most general comments on how the business practices of MPDA members will change following the refusal of clearance of their applications. Which poses the question: Have any real changes occurred at all? ★



## The American Film Institute Catalog of Motion Pictures: Feature Films 1960-1970

Executive editor,  
Richard P. Krafur  
R. R. Bowker  
Company, 1976  
Recommended price: \$95

Keith Scott

These volumes are the second set in a project that will eventually trace the complete history of the American film (as well as of all other films released in the U.S.) from 1893 to the present — and onward. As planned, the series will, when complete, consist of a two-volume set for each decade, beginning with the years 1893-1910, then 1911-20, 1921-30, 1931-40, 1941-50, 1951-60, 1961-70 together with volumes for each period covering Short Films and Newsreels.

The first volumes covering the years 1921-30, appeared in 1971, when the late Kenneth W. Munden was executive editor. The present holder of that post writes in the introduction: "We hope this volume will testify to our efforts to maintain the high quality of scholarship that characterized his work." It does — admirably.

This is undoubtedly one of the most enticing, invaluable and fact-packed books on films ever (enticing, that is, if you are not after critical opinion — there's none here). As a reference source it is unmatched. This has one volume with 1268 pages, listing the films theatrically shown in the U.S. from January 1, 1961 to December 31, 1970. The companion volume consists of 976 pages of a multi-index to the first — thus making the mammoth undertaking doubly hard, and quadrupling the ease with which the reader can cross-refer to any subject at whim.

The indices are: a credits index to every person and company who worked on the films of that decade; names of authors of source material; international production index; a dizzying thematic subject index covering all the subject matter from Aachen through Cowboys, Marijuana, Uncles, Incest, Trout, to Zwickau. Thus, if you were following up an interest in all the decade's films that had an Uncle among their characters, you would refer to the index to find no less than 131 films (from *Alive and Kicking to Zotz!*) with avuncular content.

The unbelievably detailed casts, credits and plot synopses have been culled from a wide range of sources (contradictions between sources are noted) and as often as possible the films themselves were the principal reference.

As an example of the wealth of information to be drawn from this catalogue for each of the 5775 features of 1961-70, here is the entry for a distinctly minor film:

**BLOOD FEAST:** F6.0467  
Box-office Spectaculars. Jul 1963 (Peoria, Illinois showing). Sound.; col. (Eastman Color). 35mm. 75 min. (cut to 58 min.).

A David F. Friedman-Herschell G. Lewis Production. Producers: David F. Friedman, Stanford S. Kohlberg, Herschell G. Lewis; Director: Herschell G. Lewis; Screenplay: Allison Loise Downe; Photography: Herschell G. Lewis; Film editors: Robert Sinise, Frank Romolo; Original Music: Herschell G. Lewis; Sound: David F. Friedman; Special effects: Herschell G. Lewis; Crew chief: Harry Kerby; Chief electrician: Lorin D. Hall.

Cast: Thomas Wood (Pete Thornton), Mal Arnold (Ramsey), Connie Mason (Suzette), Scott H. Hall (police captain), Lyn Bolton (Mrs. Fremont), Toni Calvert (Trudy), Gene Courtney (Tony), Ashlyn Martin (girl on beach), Sandra Sinclair (girl in apartment), Jerome Eden (high priest), Al Golden (Dr. Flanders), Craig Maudsley, Jr. (truck driver).

**Horror film.** Ramsey, an exotic caterer and a fanatic worshipper of the devil-cult of Ishtar, convinces a woman to give her daughter an "Egyptian feast", in which he secretly plans to serve parts of girls' bodies. As the day of the

# Book Reviews

party approaches, a series of bloody murders occurs. The girl's fiancé, a police lieutenant, arrives just in time to prevent her being vivisected for the feast. Fleeing from the police across the city dump, the fiendish cultist is accidentally mangled to death by the blades of a garbage truck.

See also: Caterers, Police, Demonology, Cannibalism, Ritual murder, Cults, Ishtar.

There are probably few people who will rush out to catch that film, but the quantity of information is a pointer to the worthwhile films and the coverage they receive in this marvellous book. The series will obviously take some time to complete (perhaps unfortunately, the next "episode" will cover 1911-20 — a fairly inaccessible decade), but the wealth of information, entertainment, and sheer mind-boggling trivia and detailed research contained within this endeavor make it worth its weight in gold, to any serious film student, buff, critic, historian and statistician. An excellent investment.

**Stanley Kubrick, A Film Odyssey**  
by Gene D. Phillips  
Popular Library, 1976  
Recommended price: \$5.95

J. Reid

Now that Leonard Maltin has taken over editorship of the Big Apple film series, they have much more to offer than lavish photo spreads. At first glance, a Jesuit priest might seem the wrong kind of person to provide a detailed commentary on Kubrick's career, but Father Gene D. Phillips is more than equal to the task. Not only has he seen all Kubrick's films many times — even the legendary 1950 short, *Day of the Fight* — and is, therefore, able to provide almost a frame by frame analysis of every film, but he has obviously had long discussions with Kubrick.

He is not afraid to disagree with Kubrick (he regards *Spartacus* as a much more significant and satisfying film than Kubrick will admit), and is a staunch defender of the "moral responsibility" of *Lolita* and *A Clockwork Orange*. His analysis of *2001* is a perceptive and definitive interpretation of both concept and execution. Phillips maintains that *2001* can only be appreciated through a number of viewings and by reading Arthur Clarke's book which was based on an early prose treatment of the screenplay.

Unfortunately, Phillips' book merely touches on *Barry Lyndon* which was still unfinished at press time.

The first book in the Big Apple series, *Robert Redford* by Dr. Donald A. Reed, is little more than a picture book for the actor's fans. Under Maltin's editorship, however, Big Apple have published *Hollywood Corral*, an incredibly detailed historical and critical survey of "B" westerns; *Tex Avery: King of Cartoons*, including a complete filmography and a fascinating interview with the master of animated legerdemain; *The Abbott and Costello Book*, meticulously researched and rich in reminiscence; and *Superman: From Serial to Cereal*, the definitive dossier on the character's appearances in comic strip, film

and television.

Other current books of interest include *Stanley Kubrick Directs*, by Alexander Walker; *The Cinema of Stanley Kubrick*, by Norman Kagan; and *The Films of Stanley Kubrick*, by Daniel De Vries.

Though much smaller in format, Walker's book has almost as many stills as the one by Phillips. The critical commentary is more closely based on the internal evidence of the films — Walker not having the advantage of any personal contact with Kubrick.

Kagan's book is an astute scissors-and-paste job which, as the author commendably acknowledges, is drawn from an enormous number of newspaper and magazine reviews and interviews.

De Vries' very slim account also relies to some extent on other material (including *Stanley Kubrick Directs*), though he has an uncanny ability to pinpoint the key scenes and most significant moments in Kubrick's features, from *The Killing* to *A Clockwork Orange*.

**Scarlett, Rhett, and a Cast of Thousands**

by Roland Flamini  
Macmillan, 1975  
Recommended price: \$14.85

**The Selznick Players**  
by Ronald Bowers  
A.S. Barnes and Company, 1976  
Recommended price: \$15.95

Barry Lowe

In today's torrent of film books it was only natural that authors should get round to the real film moguls of early Hollywood, those larger-than-life producers who ran the studios with wit, dedication and an iron glove. David O. Selznick was one such man. Although his name now seems irrevocably linked with his sprawling 'masterpiece' *Gone With The Wind* he has to his credit as a producer a string of more memorable films — *A Star Is Born* (1937), *Rebecca* (1937), and *Spellbound* (1945).

David O. Selznick, son of Lewis J. Selznick, was born in Pennsylvania in 1902. During their youth, he and brother Myron preferred to work in their father's film company rather than go on to tertiary education.

Lewis conned his way to the top of the Hollywood pile only to be defeated by his numerous enemies and by over-extending his company. Myron, who had been producing up to 50 films a year for his father's company, went into business as an agent; he proceeded to vent his spleen on the industry — some say in retribution for what he thought the studios had done to his father — by creating an acting elite, asking for and receiving huge payments for his clients' services.

David, after adding a stylish O to his name because his mother had neglected to give him a middle name, went into film production, hopping from studio to studio. After a short-lived period as an independent producer, his ultimate goal, he went broke in real estate speculation, and was taken on as a reader at MGM. Here he began to use that

form of communication he made uniquely his own — the memo.

Thalberg sacked him after a disagreement and he went to Paramount and helped that studio adapt to sound. He later married Louis B. Mayer's daughter, Irene.

From Paramount he moved to RKO and then back to MGM where his love of literature, gained from his mother, led to his producing some of the screen's greatest, and most faithful, adaptations from the classics: *David Copperfield*, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *Anna Karenina*. David treated each film as an artistic endeavor, rather than a mere commercial enterprise.

He left MGM to set up his own independent producing company incorporating Merian (King Kong) Cooper's Pioneer Pictures, and worked out a distribution arrangement with United Artists. His first project, in 1936, was *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, but it wasn't until 1939-40 that he reached the pinnacle of his career with *Intermezzo: A Love Story*, *Gone With the Wind*, and *Rebecca*. Here the auteur producer was in top form. Thereafter, his preoccupation with a successor to his blockbuster *Gone With the Wind* led to his divorce from Irene and his subsequent promotion of, and marriage to, Jennifer Jones.

*Gone With the Wind*, one of the all-time top grossers at the box-office was a nightmare of preparation as Roland Flamini reveals in his book.

Only a man of Selznick's courage and perseverance could have brought it off in the face of lack of finance, the unwillingness of at least two stars (Clark Gable and Leslie Howard) to be in the film, fights over the script, problems with the directors, a nationwide search for Scarlett O'Hara that led to screen tests for such unlikely candidates as Lucille Ball, and a father-in-law who was just waiting for one mistake before taking over the film and all its glory for himself.

Flamini follows the making of the film, from the fight for the rights of Margaret Mitchell's novel, through its three years of preparation for the screen, and all the political in-fighting among the actors and the crew. He examines the contribution made by the special effects team, the second unit directors and the production design teams, and incidentally makes quite a convincing case for the revoking of Victor Fleming's "Best Director" Oscar.

He dots his book, too, with anecdotes about the participants of the greatest film undertaking up to that time — Clark Gable's arriving on the set his first day with a knitted genital warmer from Carole Lombard; the inexcusable rudeness to Hattie McDaniel who was in Atlanta the day the film opened, but who was not invited to the opening; the number of days leave actresses received for menstrual periods.

Flamini's book is beautifully printed on art paper with exquisitely reproduced stills (some rare) usually appearing every three to four pages. But in writing a book of such specialized interest, he seems to have misjudged his market. The film buff, on one hand, will probably find the studio machinations tedious.

The cinephile, on the other, will regret, firstly, that the book ends too soon, with the Atlanta opening of the film, and gives little contemporary reaction to the film, and, secondly, that it is superficial in its treatment of Selznick outside the context of *Gone With the Wind*, seeing it as the pinnacle of his achievement.

In contrast, *The Selznick Players*, by Ronald Bowers, is a superb book. It devotes the first chapter to a brief biography of Selznick and the second to the filming of *Gone With the Wind*, thus successfully compressing the main points of Flamini's book into two chapters.

Continued on P. 286

## Australian Film Censorship

Continued from P. 208

In 1972, however, there were much fewer "R" rated films (16.49 per cent compared to 21 per cent in 1975) but more rejects (7.40 per cent compared to 3.38 per cent).

- (d) A comparison of reasons for cuts, between 1974 and 1975, shows that indecency was the reason for 94 per cent of these decisions in 1975 and violence only 3 per cent, while in 1974 the proportions were 76 per cent and 20 per cent.

### 2. Television films:

- (a) There has been an overall increase in film plus videotape — from 6169 in 1972 to 10,996 in 1975 (increase of 78 per cent). At that rate of increase by 1978 the Board will be handling 19,573 films and videotapes per annum.
- (b) The two major suppliers of television fare are U.S. and Britain. The proportion of British contribution has decreased by 14 per cent (videotape) and 5 per cent (film) in the last year. The U.S. has increased proportionately. The most interesting technological trend has been the rapid increase in the proportion of videotapes compared to film over the four-year period.

In 1972 the proportion of videotape compared to film was 12 per cent. By 1975 this proportion had increased to 35 per cent. At this projected rate of increase by 1978 it would be expected that more tape than film would be imported for television use.

Other trends and predictions worthy of consideration emerge as a result of technological advance — (The "Wired City" concept). An Australian domestic communications satellite system is, I believe, envisaged by the early 1980s. How this will affect, and it must affect, the degree of control exercised by individual countries, is a subject of infinite conjecture — maybe a convention along lines of Postal Union.

### Problematic Trends

- 1. Drive-ins** — The greatest single cause of complaints is the showing of "R" certificate films in drive-ins. Only two states have provision within their Acts to move against the showing of "R" films in drive-ins. One of these is South Australia, which amended its legislation in 1973 to give the Minister power to prohibit the showing of certain "R" films in particular drive-ins; the other is Queensland, which is empowered to act against the showing of films under the provisions of the 1974 Films Review Act. State officials are often asking us if a particular film is unsuitable for showing in a drive-in. It is our contention that no drive-in which can be seen from the road is suitable for an "R" film. It is a case of the drive-ins being unsuitable rather than an "R" certificate film being unsuitable.
- 2. Warnings:** The idea of warnings has been widely canvassed for some time. It is thought, by some, that warnings should be attached to films which are particularly violent, sexually graphic, linguistically crude etc. However, our Board and many state officials involved in censorship decisions and policy believe that although the idea is sound, implementation would be difficult, unless new legislation were introduced prohibiting the use of these warnings in a sensationalistic and exploitive way. If warnings were exploited, the point of the exercise would be reversed, attention would be drawn to these films and warnings could be used as an advertising gimmick.
- 3. Queensland Board of Review:** By an Act of Parliament, the Queensland Board of Review was set up in 1974. This enabled it to override the decisions of the Film Censorship

Board, in that state, in relation to the exhibition of a film in Queensland. They cannot alter the classification of a film, but they may prohibit it from screening.

This has resulted in a number of films which we have passed "R", being prohibited in Queensland. This fragmentation is not a matter we treat lightly.

### Trends in Attitudes

Since the introduction of the "R" certificate in November 1971, the debate on censorship has not abated, but it would appear to be less polarized than before.

In 1976 I do not expect either a further "great leap forward", or a lurching backwards. In five years we have covered, for good or ill, more ground than was expected. And now, I suspect, there will be a period of standstill and contemplation, marking time before the emergence of the next trend.

I believe most people in Australia today believe in the concept of limited censorship, and they see it as merely another ingredient of a well-ordered society. Even the most liberal, it would appear, would like to see some aspects of expres-

sion controlled, in order to afford protection from real or imagined harm or infringements of "basic rights". If it is not sex, then it is something else — i.e. violence, incitement to drug abuse, racial prejudice, release of official secrets; or they want to protect something, such as historic buildings, reputations or the innocence of children; or they want to ban such things as advertising in children's viewing time or poor quality television.

In all this, there must be a balancing of individual freedom with the interests of society as a whole. The above concepts of control are based on the premise that society has a right to protect itself from itself — limited censorship is merely an extension of that right.

But it is the responsibility of both the individual and society as a whole to determine where these limits should be set. This can be done through discussion and debate, and an increased "open government" policy.

In conclusion I think it would be fair to say that in Australia today, we have one of the most liberal, orderly and uniform systems of censorship in the world. ★

## AUSTRALIAN FILM CENSORSHIP: A CAPSULE HISTORY

- 1896: Cinematograph introduced into Australia via Sydney and Melbourne.
- Cases of juvenile delinquency attributed to influence of cinema contribute to pressure which results in the establishment of formal censorship procedures in NSW under the Theatres and Public Halls Act 1908, and in South Australia in 1914.
- In World War I, censorship boards are briefly set up in NSW and Tasmania.
- 1917: Creation of a Commonwealth Film Censorship Board under the Customs Act effectively pre-empting functions of state censor boards.
- 1917-1928: Federal censors located in Victoria.
- 1925: In their first report, Commonwealth Chief Film Censor, Professor Wallace, and the Censor (Sydney), Mr W. Cresswell O'Reilly, recommend introduction of a classification system to replace the one whereby films were passed unconditionally (322), after eliminations (331), or rejected (68).
- 1925: Section 52(g) of Customs Act provides the Commonwealth with authority for the prohibition of the importation of goods. Under this section proclamations have been issued prohibiting the importation of films and advertising matter under certain conditions; the latter are contained in regulations under the Act. At its inception in 1917 the Board consisted of three people, soon replaced by a part-time Chief Censor resident in Melbourne, assisted by a full-time deputy censor resident in Sydney. Appeals were made to the Chief Censor against the decisions of the deputy censor.
- 1926: Consultations between state and federal governments result in Victorian Censorship of Films Act, providing for a Victorian censorship of all films entering the state and permitting the censor to order the cutting or banning of a film, or to conditionally approve films for exhibition to all but those aged between 6 and 16. Such conditional approval has to be clearly shown on all advertisements and on the screen before exhibition of the relevant film.
- All these powers are then vested, under agreement with the Commonwealth, in the Commonwealth Censor, who will act on behalf of the Victorian State government.
- Trade opposes new Act's classification provisions on grounds that the industry provides family entertainment, and exclusion of children would also mean exclusion of parents. Difficulties, too, in judging a child's age, and in double-feature programs consisting of one conditionally approved and one unconditionally approved film.
- 1928: Cresswell O'Reilly appointed Commonwealth Chief Film Censor 1928, a position he holds until 1942.
- 1928: As a result of the adoption by Federal Cabinet of 12 of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Moving Picture Industry:
  - (i) Censorship offices are moved to Bligh St., Sydney.
  - (ii) A three-member Censorship Board is appointed.
  - (iii) New Censorship Regulations under Customs Act are drawn up, and Commonwealth film censorship is concentrated in Sydney.
  - (iv) Three-man Appeals Board created.
 All above to take effect as from January 1929. Also, the Regulations give Commonwealth the power to approve exportation of Australian-made films — not revoked until 1969. Recommendation regarding classification and censorship of certain films as "Suitable for General Exhibition" not formally adopted.
- As Depression erodes exhibitors' profits, agitation increases in Victoria for repeal of the Act's "6 to 16" clause, which occurs in December 1932, a decision the Council of Churches and other pressure groups unsuccessfully oppose. The Victorian experience effectively prevents introduction of compulsory film classifications until creation of the "R" certificate in 1971.
- 1930: Customs Department and Motion Picture

Distributors agree that films suitable for children would be marked "For General Exhibition", thus placing major responsibility on parents. Others are endorsed "Not Suitable for Children" or "Suitable Only for Adults" under a "gentlemen's agreement" with all states, except Victoria, which prevails until 1947.

15. Chief Censor Cresswell O'Reilly's stated credo (1930): "There will always be an element in the community which delights in the vulgar, the sex-suggestive, the lawless and the brutal side of life, and there are some producers who will seek to pander to that section. Censorship is trying under great difficulties to ensure that a better side shall be presented".
16. 1932: Three-member appeal board replaced by one appeal censor.
17. 1935: "Censorship, rightly regarded, should like the profession of medicine, look forward to and work towards its own elimination". (Chief Censor O'Reilly).
18. 1934: Tasmanian state censorship abolished.
19. 1942: Mr J. O. Alexander appointed Chief Censor.
20. 1947: Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania pass legislation and conclude agreements delegating their film censorship powers and functions — including classification — to the Commonwealth; the new legislation to commence on January 1, 1949. This is later followed by similar delegations from NSW, Victoria, South Australia and the ACT.
21. However, there is still no Australia-wide uniformity regarding responsibility for policing classification requirements, although in 1956 South Australia makes advertising of censorship classifications compulsory by regulation, following on Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania in 1947, and NSW follows suit in 1969.
22. 1956: The Commonwealth government decides the Film Censorship Board should examine and classify all films imported for television, applying the program standards of the Broadcasting Control Board by a delegation from that Board. Film Censorship Board increased from three members to five.
23. 1957: Mr C. J. Campbell, a former secretary to the Minister of Customs, succeeds Mr J. O. Alexander as Chief Censor; the latter appointed Appeal Censor for three years.
24. 1959: Film Censorship Board increased from five to seven members.
25. 1964: Mr R. J. Prowse succeeds Mr C. J. Campbell as Chief Censor; Mr Campbell appointed Appeal Censor, to be succeeded by Mr T. Maher and Mr T. Cadwalader.
26. 1970: Establishment of Films Board of Review to operate from January 4, 1971, under chairmanship of Mr Stanley Hawes, former producer-in-chief of the Commonwealth Film Unit (now Film Australia).
27. 1971: All states, at instigation of Customs Minister Don Chipp, revise film censorship legislation to provide for introduction of the "R" certificate and for compulsory display of film classifications in advertising.
28. 1973: Meeting of state ministers clarifies advisory classifications as follows to provide a greater guide for parents:
  - (i) "N.R.C." (Not Recommended for Children) will be intended to mean "not recommended for children under 12".
  - (ii) "M" (For Mature Audiences) will be intended to mean "recommended as suitable for persons 15 years and over".
  - (iii) Lower legal age limit for admittance of persons to theatres exhibiting "R" classified films will be reduced from six years to two years in all states and territories where that does not now apply.
29. 1973: Film Censorship Board increased from seven to nine members.
30. 1973: South Australia amends legislation to give minister power to prohibit certain "R" films from showing in drive-in theatres, the screens of which are visible from nearby.
31. 1974: Queensland creates a Films Board of Review empowered to prohibit the distribution in the State films registered by the Film Censorship Board, which are determined to be "objectionable".



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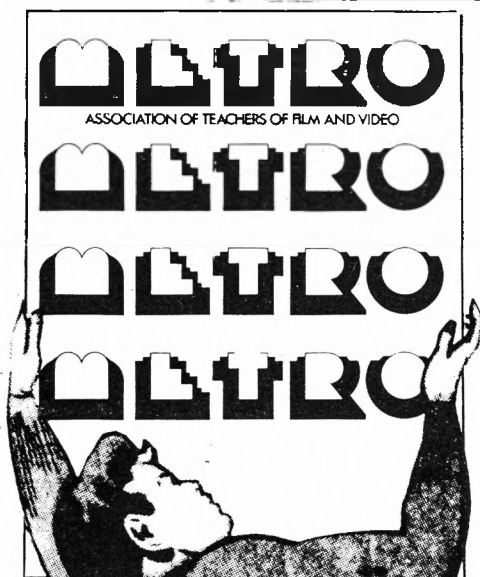
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**Theatre  
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AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL THEATRE MAGAZINE

## 1900

Continued from P. 222

But not everyone agreed with Professor Borraro. The press reported that the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Salerno, Prof. Nicola Cilento, had written a formal complaint to the librarian. Professor Borraro's action, he said, was an insult to the city of Salerno, which was in the cultural avant-garde of Italy.

Judge Anania viewed 1900 in its entirety and his argument, impeccable in its logic, was that a work of art could not be judged properly after inspecting only a portion of the whole work.

He claimed the film was not obscene in any way, and it was re-released throughout the country. But a small biographical item in *Il Messaggero* sheds an interesting light on the whole episode. Bertolucci's film, it declared, was not the first to be morally evaluated by Dr. Anania. In the past, producers with films of high artistic merit, but of questionable taste, had been wont to premiere their films at remote Ortisei, so that if complaints were made Judge Anania would handle them. Francesco Rosi's *Cadaveri eccellenti* (The Context) was a case in point. It had been cleared for public exhibition by Judge Anania, who, the paper declared, was earning the title "justice of the cinema".

By the time of the re-release of part one, the second part of 1900 was breaking box-office records. Marco Ferreri's *L'Ultima Donna* was in second place, closely followed by Visconti's *L'innocente*. Obviously, the American trio of Paramount, United Artists, and Twentieth Century-Fox had not backed a loser after all.

But apart from highlighting the problem of film censorship and reflecting on the morals and manoeuvres of film producers, was the whole uproar justified by the quality of the product? I think so. Bertolucci's 1900 is perhaps one of the more important films to come out of Italy in recent years.

The film skilfully blends a lesson in political history with one in cinematographic art to produce genuine theatrical entertainment. For some, however, the polemics will be rather strong meat. The reviewer for *Vogue* headed her article "The man who sex-shook us with *Last Tango* zaps a political jolt with 1900; Bertolucci's massive, star-jammed epic may make you see red!" Yet she summarized her attitude and response to the film in this way:

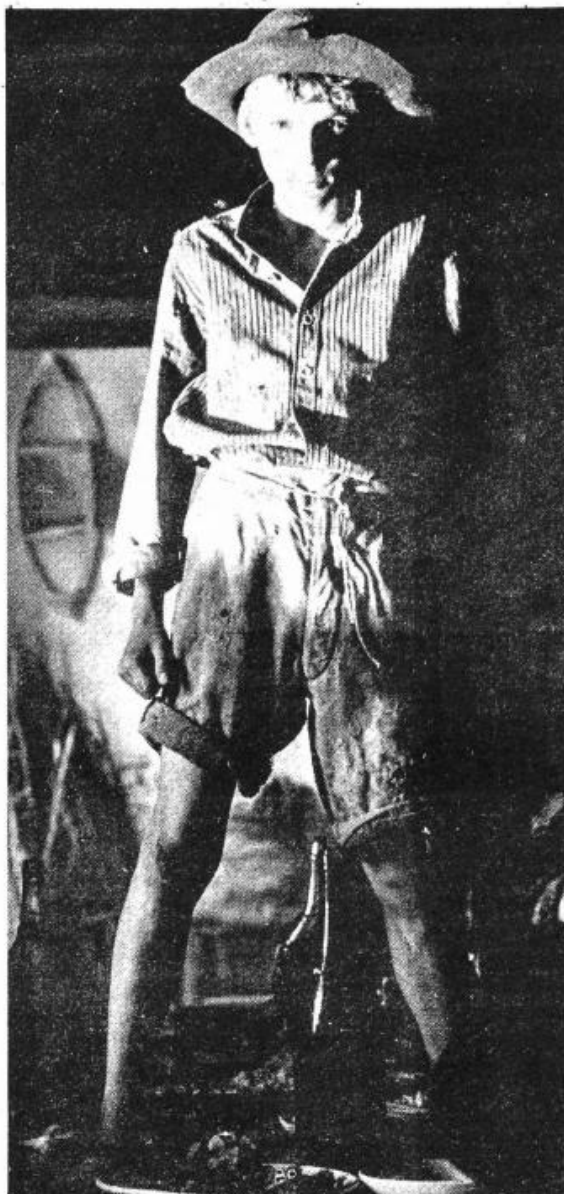
"On the day of the interview" (she is referring to an interview with a somewhat depressed Bertolucci at the Cannes festival this year) "a right-wing delegate shot and killed two young communists who were disrupting his rally. 1900 is an immensely important film, and the shiver it produces comes from the fact that it is more relevant today than we care to think."

The shiver in question — which ran up the backs of some of the American members of the press gallery at Cannes — comes towards the end of the film at the moment of celebration of the day of national liberation on April 25, 1945. On the screen one sees a Chinese-type ballet (recalling *The Red Detachment of Women*) with jubilant *contadini* carrying and dancing around a huge patchwork flag banner, built up from all the communist flags the peasants had been hiding away during the years of the war.

It is a moving scene, even if somewhat melodramatic, for the dream of liberty was a shortlived one. When the coalition government came to power, the guns and ammunition belts were handed in, and the revolution lost its teeth. Perhaps those who booed and hissed at Cannes felt cheated.

Why should American capital be thrown away on Italian communist propaganda? The probable answer is a simple one: if a financial investment brings in dividends, why not make it?

The story itself begins in the year 1900. A private buffoon dressed as Rigoletto announces



the death of Verdi, and his death symbolizes an end to Italy of the *Risorgimento* and the birth of the modern era. After a few other preliminaries we witness the birth of two boys on the same day to the families of opposing clans, one an heir to the Berlinghieri property and fortune, the other a bastard son of a peasant woman. These 'twins' provide the major thread of the story, comparing their muscular skills (and their endowments of nature) as adolescents, and as grown men becoming enmeshed in the politics of the fascist era and embroiled in the domestic problems of marriage. The first half of the film is lyrical and gentle, the second half violent and introspective.

The idea of making a long historical film with a social message came to Bertolucci shortly after he had completed *The Conformist* back in 1970. *The Conformist* had been based on Alberto Moravia's novel of the same name; Bertolucci set about writing his own story with the assistance of his brother Giuseppe and his film editor, Franco Arcalli.

Bertolucci's own background gave him much of the material he needed for the film. He was born in Emilia, whose beautiful countryside forms the setting for the story. He knew the peasants and their problems well. His parents were relatively wealthy and lived in a large mansion on the outskirts of Parma. They were also talented. His father Attilio was a successful poet and literary critic, while his mother was Australian, the daughter of an Irish woman and an Italian engineer who emigrated to Australia for political reasons towards the end of the last century.

But like so many sons of the rich, Bertolucci turned his back on the past and struck a more progressive road. By the age of 15 he had com-

pleted his first silent 16mm film, *The Death of the Pig*. The slaughter of the animal was turned into a metaphor of sacrifice, with its blood falling on the white snow and the wooden frame on which it was dragged along by the peasants being "a sort of gallows". The memory of this beginner's film must have lingered on, for we are given a similar episode in 1900.

The problem with the new film was money. Although *The Conformist* was a success in critical circles, it was not the box-office success that would attract money from private investors for the new film. But after the success of *Last Tango*, money became freely available for anything Bertolucci might care to make.

The Italian critics have given the film a warm reception. Morando Morandini (who played the part of Cesare in Bertolucci's *Prima della Rivoluzione* in 1964) headed his review in the weekly journal *Tempo*, "Hammer, sickle and Coca-Cola", in reference to its historical origins. He wrote:

"It is a *Hollywoodiana-Sovietico* film, with passages of ethnic documentary on the Emilian countryside. It is a personal film, yet one which has developed and achieved its final form through a profound collective process... It is a *film d'auteur*, even though it has been obliged to make concessions to popular taste... by the pre requisites of sex, violence, sadism, perversion... It has been somewhat over-studied at the writing stage, and yet is realised with a maximum of improvisation, in direct proportion to its immense cost."

The "Hollywood-Soviet" label is an apt one, for echoes from the past (*The Good Earth*; *Grapes of Wrath*; *The Cranes are Flying*) give the film a rich texture of reminiscence and add to its audience appeal.

The underlying play of polarities in the film will also appeal to semiologists and semioticians, for as Bertolucci told the correspondent for *Vogue*:

"I am a Marxist, in that when I make a film I try to analyse; to use a dialectic method; to unite the despair for this dying bourgeois class with love for the class that will win in the whole world, the working class. Dialectic is what is missing in the new American cinema, even in the best films."

What is not missing in Bertolucci's film is a star-studded cast. The setting of the film may be regional, but the cast is international. Burt Lancaster and Sterling Hayden give good performances as the two opposing patriarchs, Alfredo Berlinghieri and Leo Dalco; Donald Sutherland bares his long teeth as the sadistic fascist bully Attila; Werner Bruhns is the charming and slightly corrupt uncle Ottavio; the beautiful Dominique Sanda is the wealthy Ada Fiastri Paulhan, who burns up the road in her Bugatti, drinks too much, and even has an occasional sniff of cocaine; and Gerard Depardieu plays the peasant son Olmo, the Italian word for "oak".

Italy is also well represented: Robert de Niro gives a moving and sympathetic portrait of Alfredo, the heir to the Berlinghieri fortune; Laura Betti, as Regina the wife of Attila, stuns us with her mask-like face, which barely conceals a complex interior world of pent-up emotions of envy and hate; and Stefania Sandrelli plays Anita, the tender socialist schoolmistress friend of Olmo, whose sexual antics so shocked the professor's daughter from Salerno.

Bertolucci must also be indebted to the many peasants from the little village of Guastalla in Emilia who contributed "their faces, experience, enthusiasm and songs", and who demonstrated their proficiency in waving red flags and singing the *Internationale*.

In spite of all this, perhaps the film is not political after all. Perhaps it is really an old-fashioned love story; the story of two men whom fate had delegated to different social levels, but who, through some ineffable quality of the human psyche, were able to view themselves as equals, and thus experience that rare event — a true and lasting human relationship.★



# Columns

## AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION

Over the past few months the Commission has continued its policy of wide consultation with the industry. In Adelaide it met with the South Australian exhibitors and had policy discussions with the South Australian Film Corporation, and in Melbourne it met with the Victorian Film Corporation. Ken Watts, John Daniell and Lachie Shaw visited Perth for discussions with Freevideo, the Perth Institute of Film and Television, a number of filmmakers and possible investors. In Sydney there have been meetings with the various unions and associations concerned with the industry which the Commission considers were most profitable.

Lachie Shaw and his staff have not yet moved over from the Australia Council, but it is hoped that it will only be a matter of a few weeks. The Commission will be devoting most of its November meeting to decisions that have to be made in what is now its Creative Development Branch, and the chairman and full time commissioners are spending considerable time briefing themselves on these new responsibilities. The plan is to spend alternate meetings of the Commission on the Project Development and Creative Development branches of the Commission, while giving John Daniell and Lachie Shaw freedom to raise urgent matters at any meeting.

With general box-office down and Australian film box-office doing well, Christmas and January will be interesting to watch, with a number of Australian films being released. Those due for release over this period are: *Deathcheaters*, *Break of Day*, *Mrs Eliza Fraser*, *Summer of Secrets*, *Storm Boy*, *Barney*, *Don's Party* and *Raw Deal*.

The first three or four months of 1977 should also be busy on the production side. Shooting has been scheduled to commence on the following films which have received AFC funding: *The Getting of Wisdom*, *In Search of Anna*, *Summerfield*, *The Last Wave*, *Sparks*, *Mango Tree* and *The Irishman*.

## MUSICIANS' UNION

For the first time private producers of television series have used Australian background and theme music for their productions.

This has come about due to continuing submissions by our organization to bodies such as the Australian Film Commission, which has made money available for a number of pilot schemes.

One of the greatest impediments to the use of these background products is their subsequent re-use and/or a system of payment to cover such re-use. It is not practicable to expect a total payment each time there is a performance. On the other hand, it is neither fair nor reasonable for a musician to make a single recording, which is then used ad infinitum with no additional payment.

We have been unsuccessful in our attempts to have performers' copyright legislation enacted in this country, but we are pressing on to have such an Act implemented, so that performers are protected in the same way.

The fact that there is a Copyright Act, which covers the composers' works, is often misunderstood by the public to mean that the performers are protected in the same way.

Just how far-reaching the effects of the Industries Assistance Commission's recommendations will be is difficult to state, but it would be a tragedy if this report placed a brake on the Australian film industry in any way.

The three major trade unions involved in the entertainment industry — Actors' Equity, Musicians' Union of Australia and Australian Theatrical and Amusement Employees Association — are working closely on matters of common interest in this field.

## NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA National Film Archive

The recent discovery of a print of *The Breaking of the Drought*, Franklyn Barrett's feature film of 1920, received considerable attention from the media. Currently the nitrate print is being duped for preservation, following which it will be compared with incomplete sections of the film previously held by the archive so that necessary editorial restoration can be made. When this process is complete, viewing prints will be made so the film can once again be seen as a complete entity.

Publicity resulting from the find has produced other dividends — many people have spontaneously written with questions and information about Australia's filmic past and, yes, some have even sent in more old film. One lady from a remote South Australian town has donated a collection of Australian documentaries of the 1920s; one alert man has located some old films in a Sydney suburban department store.

From Doug Hardy have come the original negatives of films made by Southern Cross Productions in the late 1940s and 1950s — they include *Nor'easter*, a documentary on sailing, *Sunshine Romance*, an atmospheric piece of post-war social history, and a record of the 1951 Sydney-Hobart yacht race. From Twentieth Century-Fox came new preservation copies of Anthony Kimmins' *Smiley* (1956), and Lewis Milestone's *Kangaroo* (1951).

In what is undoubtedly the archive's largest acquisition, Sydney television station ATN7 has passed over some 7000 cans of film — yet to be sorted and listed. The collection contains drama series, documentaries and commercials — dating from the beginning of television in 1956 up to (approximately) 1967. Most of the material consists of original negatives or kinescopes.

Through the good offices of the Association for a National Film and Television Archive, photographer Len Jordan donated a magnificent range of over 100 stills from *For The Term Of His Natural Life* (1927). Many of the stills represent scenes missing from the surviving original print of the film, and their photographic quality is outstanding. Filmmaker Bruce Beresford donated a range of documentation on the two Barry McKenzie films, and from respective distributors or producers, stills and publicity material on current films including *Mad Dog Morgan* and *The Fourth Wish*.

## Film Study Collection

Recent acquisitions in the Film Study collection include: the complete but unsubtitled version of Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*, her epic film record of a Nazi rally; two short experiments by the American, Frank Mouris — *Coney* and *Screentest* — both

shown at this year's Sydney Film Festival; two more films by the American experimental filmmaker, Bruce Baillie — *Quixote* and *All My Life* (the Library already holds Baillie's four part film *Quick Billy*); one of the great classics of American documentary, *The Plow That Broke The Plains*, made in 1936 by Pare Lorentz about the problem of the dust bowl area of the Great Plains; and three films by Len Lye — *Colour Box* and *Rainbow Dance*, both lively hand-painted advertisements made for the British G.P.O. in the mid-1930s, and *When The Pie Was Opened*, a whimsical live-action recipe for a vegetable pie, made for the wartime Ministry of Food in Britain.

## ASSOCIATION FOR A NATIONAL FILM AND TELEVISION ARCHIVE

It is gratifying to see that 18 months after the Association was formed, the Australian Film Commission has set up a working party to report to the Federal government on the current state of film archives within Australia. The Association doesn't actually occupy a position on the working party, whose composition is limited to government bodies, but we have maintained contact with the AFC to follow its findings and recommendations. We expect to make a submission in due course. The Association recommends that other interested organizations likewise make submissions to the archives working party, whose report will be ready for consideration by higher Federal government authorities in early 1977.

At least six Association members form part of a new steering committee which has successfully recommended that the AFC grant a sum of \$12,250 to enable a trial one-year program of interviews with Australian film pioneers. The interviews, to be recorded for archival preservation on film and audio tape, will be conducted by members of the steering committee with, it is to be hoped, administrative and technical assistance from the Film and Television School.

The trial grouping of 35 interviewees has been chosen from an original list of around 100 film producers, writers, directors, actors, technicians, distributors and exhibitors, and will cover a wide range of activities over the film industry's 80-year existence. A number of film pioneers have already been well documented, so that further decisions may have to be made in favor of the important ones for whom coverage has been minimal or non-existent.

In the preservation field, members of the Association have recently passed on a valuable collection of stills to the film archive at the National Library. In the course of interviewing pioneer Len Jordan for the *Cinema Papers* (June-July 1976) article on De Forest Phonoflms, Ian Griggs and Graham Shirley found about 100 action stills from the 1927 production of *For The Term Of His Natural Life*, including many depicting scenes now completely lost from the surviving nitrate print of the film. Also in the collection were stills from *The Mystery Of A Hansom Cab* (1925), three more Australasian Films productions, the Longford-directed *Pioneers* and *The Hills of Hate*, and Dunstan Webb's *Tall Timber*, all made in 1926. The stills have a depth and clarity too rarely matched by film publicity today. The *Term* material, in particular, is said to be highly prized by the Library film archive, who, if proper finance was available, should be encouraged to incorporate the stills in a reconstruction of

Norman Dawn's now incomplete classic.

Much-needed support for the Association has recently come from the executive of the Producers and Directors' Guild, who have paid for the postage of Association recruitment and membership forms to all members of PDGA. In addition to its contact with the AFC working party, the Association has made a submission to the NSW Interim Film Commission, in which it urges closer communication between federal and state authorities in the future planning of the state's archival facilities.

The AFC's working party is known to be seriously considering the Canberra versus Sydney/Melbourne debate for the location of a future film archive headquarters, and the Association feels that this is an issue on which the proposed NSW Film Corporation should have an influential say.

## THE ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF FILM AND VIDEO

One of the long-standing aims of the Association of Teachers of Film and Video was to pressure the Education Department into giving formal status to film teaching.

It was felt that without this status, film appreciation and production courses would be regarded by school administrators as expensive and trendy luxuries.

The breakthrough came in 1975, when the Minister for Education, Mr. Thompson, set up the Joint Committee for the Study of Film and Television.

However, now that ATFAV has achieved its goal of a permanent voice in the department, what happens next? Does it duplicate the roles of the department committee, or move more forcefully into other areas of concern to creative media teacher?

This was the main problem facing ATFAV in 1976. A substantially new committee had to establish new direction and goals for the Association.

We continued our publication of the quarterly *Metro*, and moved the emphasis of the magazine towards providing teachers with resources and ideas for classroom courses. We also succeeded in getting the standing committee to set up a publishing unit to provide teachers with more resources.

We organized a couple of special screenings with the co-operation of the State Film Centre, but the committee felt that it would be a displacement of energy to supplement Melbourne's ample supply of film screenings, with regular film nights for film teachers.

We are currently organizing a series of seminars and discussion evenings with filmmakers and media workers. We feel that this personal contact would be useful for the media teaching community.

The ATFAV organized two exhibitions: an exhibition of student prints, which will be displayed around the state over the next 12 months, and the Clean Heads Video Festival, which provided 30 schools with an outlet for their video dramas, documentaries and studio shows currently made in our schools.

The ATFAV continued to provide film teachers with a voice in the public debate on government media policy. In the current climate generated by the Green Inquiry and the emancipation of the ABC, we will attempt to make our voice heard in the demands for an independent, creative ABC, and for a viable Australian film and television industry.



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TRUGANINI — THE LAST OF THE TASMANIANS

# Letters

## CUT-BACK

Dear Sir,

In June this year, the Melbourne Filmmakers' Co-operative applied to the Film, Radio and Television Board of the Australia Council for \$91,000 to fund the distribution and exhibition of Australian independent films.

At the final meeting of the Board — before its functions were taken over by the AFC — a recommendation was made to allocate to the Co-op \$65,000 of the \$91,000 requested — a marginal increase on the Co-op's 1975 allocation.

This week, however, notification was received from the AFC that the allocation to the Melbourne Filmmakers' Co-op for the 75/76 financial year has been slashed from the recommended \$65,000 to \$47,000, little more than half the budget requirements projected in our grant submission, and represents a cut-back of 40 per cent on last year's funding.

This cut-back is the result of a decision to allocate no monies at all for the distribution side of the Co-op's activities.

During meetings with Lachie Shaw of the Creative Development Division of the AFC, called to discuss the submission, representatives of the Melbourne Co-op were questioned on the overlap between the distribution functions of the Co-op and the Australian Film Institute's Vincent Library.

In view of the decision by the AFC to cut-back the Co-op's distribution funds, there can be no doubt that the AFC now regards the Vincent Library as the sole legitimate distribution outlet for Australian independent films in Melbourne worthy of support.

This attitude runs contrary to the findings of the Hodsdon report into independent distribution and exhibition in Australia, which revealed that the Melbourne and Sydney Film Co-ops have distributed significantly greater numbers of Australian independent films in recent years than the Vincent Library.

As the Co-op movement is a mainstay of Australian filmmaking, the decision of the

AFC can only be seen as a misguided attempt at economy which will be damaging to the Australian film scene in the long run.

There are now more than 250 films in our library and no funds to do anything with them, which will make it very difficult to meet our responsibilities to Melbourne filmmakers on an adequate scale, although we by no means intend to stop trying.

Marek Zaylor

for members and staff of  
the Melbourne Filmmakers' Co-operative

## DISAPPOINTED

Dear Sir,

I was disappointed to find both factual and editorial mistakes in the article you published on my film work in the Sept/Oct issue of *Cinema Papers* based on an interview with Gordon Glenn and Ian Stocks. The factual mistakes, credits and age are, to some degree, excusable, but editorial ones are not.

To get my age wrong by several years could be easily dismissed as perhaps a typographical error, but you compound your mistake by expanding it to the kind of catch line one expects from paint or whisky advertisements: a la "still going strong!"

And was our two-hour interview so difficult that you caught only the colorful bits and missed the substance? Namely, the ease and frequency with which the press and money moguls of the film industry dub filmmakers into categories that all too often prejudice their career and seldom recognize that a good filmmaker is a good filmmaker full stop.

You have done well to keep *Cinema Papers* afloat as long as you have. But I respectfully suggest that you will join the long list of expired film journals if you don't watch more carefully your facts and your thoughts. I sincerely hope you survive.

John Heyer  
Sydney

## Editor's Note

The edited manuscript of the interview referred to above was forwarded to Mr Heyer for inspection. It was returned to the editor amended, and was published without further alteration.

The editor apologizes to Mr Heyer for printing his age incorrectly: he is 60, not 66. The editor also regrets that in the John

Heyer Filmography, some of the films listed under Awards as having been produced and directed by John Heyer were produced by him but not directed, namely: *The Canecutters, Hands, Shell Spirit, Boot, Like New, and The Sleeper*.

## KNOCKBACK

Dear Sir,

I recently received a letter from the Australian Film Commission rejecting an application requesting \$3000 for script development and pre-production for *Death of a Circus* — a reconstructed, exploded, comic feature documentary to be made with a European circus currently touring this country.

I spent three months researching the film with the circus, clowning and travelling, and then presented the AFC with field notes—an 18-page first-draft treatment, pre-production program and budget, all explaining at length what the film had going for it: its box-office attraction, content, style, mood, political allegories, and the spirit of the circus performers who were to act in the film.

I received an abrupt reply rejecting the project as "not viable at the box-office," and quoting only one of the assessors' critiques which, as the letter pointedly adds, "sums up the Commission's feelings regarding this project."

"A most improbable yarn spun around a thin and dull story line. Who, in this day and age, could possibly believe that a circus could arrive in Australia from Europe without management? It would be most unlikely that a European troupe would be wandering along 'the rugged south-eastern Victorian coastline' without anyone being aware of its existence. Perhaps this story was originally set in a European country and transplanted to Australia for local content. It's too puerile to warrant any further development. Circus stories can be so wonderful — full of charisma and excitement — but *Circus Movie* (revised title) lacks the magical mystique that is vitally necessary for today's sophisticated cinematic marketplace."

The prejudice and bias in this assessment speaks for itself. I am amazed at the ignorance of the assessor who is totally out of sympathy with the exploration of today's filmmakers regarding the content, style, language and logic of contemporary cinema.

I have talked over the project with a number of filmmakers, all of whom have

been excited by it and tremendously encouraging.

1. The AFC assessors either (a) read the application and didn't like it, or (b) read it, but did not grasp the nature of the project, because the outline was not sufficiently developed — which was why the application was made, or (c) didn't read it.
2. The letter is aggressive, (which may be the only thing in its favor), and personally abusive. They accuse me of deceit, plagiarism, and fraud.
3. It is presumptuous, narrow minded and conservative. It reveals a stereotyped view of circuses, and more precisely, circus films. They apparently want isolationist, indulgent 'myths', when others, including myself, are after gut-tearing reality.
4. I object to faceless assessors operating behind the security of anonymity and secrecy. I demand to know who they are and I demand to see a copy of the assessments.
5. I detect a strong bias against Melbourne filmmakers. I suspect it is because the rejection of applications from Melbourne filmmakers have less immediate personal and political repercussions.
6. The attitude expressed in the letter also reflects the inflexibility of the AFC assessment procedures and raise problematic questions about "writing" a film and communicating these ideas with funding bureaucracies.
7. By the AFC's rejection of this and other submissions it would appear that its main concern is the commercial viability of a project: in playing safe the AFC is undermining its own viability and strangling innovative filmmakers and filmmaking.

By insisting that filmmakers conform to established formulas — even at script development stages — the AFC is setting a dangerous standard for those Australian filmmakers who are more concerned with content than style, and as much with content as "commercial viability."

Garry Patterson  
Melbourne

## Editor's Note

Garry Patterson's films include *Retreat: Retreat, Here's to You, Mr. Robinson* (with Peter Tammer), and *How Willingly You Sing*.

Continued from P. 214

## POOLING, PACKING AND PUBLICITY

Pooling and packaging concepts are based around a 'safety-in-numbers' principle, whereby firstly (as encouraged by the AFC), investors pool their money in the production of five films and receive AFC incentive as well as the personal security that at least an effective proportion of the five will make money; secondly, that a film package properly marketed in the pre-production sense can lure a production advance as well as a release guarantee from a distributor; and thirdly, to take the post-production package selling option taken by a company like Hexagon which has had ongoing continuity of output. Hal McElroy sees the pre-selling of films as a package as the key to all future production of features, while Robert Kirby says that for Hexagon the trend of packaging and selling in groups of around six films will likewise continue.

In the publicity context, Harry Miller said it was essential for a producer to keep his investors regularly informed, and during production to ensure a constant flow of press exposure. Paul Riomfalvy said many more Australian producers should employ a unit publicist, and in the case of *The Picture Show Man*, in which the NSW Interim Film Commission has a substantial interest, Riomfalvy (in his Film Commission capacity) has even been handing press releases to political journalists.

## OLD NEWS AND NEW RESOLUTIONS

Before the final topic of the seminar ("The Future of Theatre Activity"), the following resolutions prompted by film and television talk were tabled: (Only submissions in quotation marks have been quoted exactly as tabled.)

1) "That this seminar strongly urges the Producers and Directors' Guild of Australia, together with the Film and Television Production Association, to approach immediately the Australian Film Commission with a view to arranging two-year agreements regarding minimum fees and charges with other film industry unions, guilds, equipment suppliers, studios and laboratories, to achieve stabilization of costs in all areas."

2) "Because this seminar recognizes the importance now for Australian production of film and television to produce international sales, the PDGA should be urged to examine the feasibility of holding a further industry-wide seminar in six months' time, which should deal with all aspects of international marketing and promotion of Australian products and that overseas keynote speakers be invited to attend covering the areas of distribution, film agencies and promotion, and that this seminar be organized on a national basis."

3) "That the seminar recommends the PDGA release a press statement to quell some of the prophets of doom and reassure the community that the Australian film and television industry is a lucrative form of investment for private financiers."

4) "That this meeting prepare a submission to Mr A. A. Staley, the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister, in accordance with the thoughts expressed at this meeting, and that a small sub-committee of people be elected to prepare this submission."

5) "That this committee should comprise the following: Cecil Holmes, Ric Birch, Roger Whitaker, John Erichson, Julie James-Bailey, Kip Porteous, Maureen Walsh."

6) "That the PDGA set up a sub-committee to market the concept that educational films and videotape produced by the film industry have

value and should be commissioned by educational authorities."

7) "This seminar recommends that the PDGA should set up its own information service: that a sub-committee of more experienced members be set up to assist and advise other members on the final preparation of concept preparations, and we ask the NSW Interim Film Commission to set up a script and concept development fund immediately, and that the producer pay this back at an interest rate of no more than six per cent."

8) "That this seminar urge the Government to unwrap and debate the Vincent Report, 1963, with particular reference to the paragraphs mentioning assistance to production companies and investors."

9) (Proposed but not yet voted upon) "The Tariff Board report on the Australian film industry, dated June 30, 1973, recommended that the industry be subsidized. Resolved that a subsidy scheme be implemented which is available to all films, not only those in which the AFC invests; further, the chairman of this meeting write to the Prime Minister requesting him to implement such a scheme in the only performing art form which the IAC recommended should be subsidized, and which is the only performing art form not to be subsidized."

A sub-committee meeting was held on November 16, to find ways of implementing the resolutions.

For old hands, "Entertainment is big business" had been a refresher course with some interesting new twists. For those unfamiliar with the work of the 60s, the new resolutions probably hadn't seemed enough. But at least they provided impetus: a start on the industry's first floor using old foundations, which the next seminar and its attendant lobbying will do well to continue. ★



## The Persistence of Vision

Continued from P. 225

"The physiological significance of a mechanism which tends to diminish the sensitivity of the retina for a similar stimulus and increase it for a dissimilar one is very considerable. The fact that both facilitation and inhibition are involved is well brought out . . . in fact, in its essentials this function is akin to the reciprocal innervation of muscles whereby the contraction of one is associated with the relaxation of its antagonist: for this reason McDougall (1903) ascribes the phenomenon to changes in the conducting paths of visual impressions. The tendency to rhythmic variations also finds a replica in the physical activity of these paths.

"Looked at biologically, the process is one which favors change, that effaces only old impressions and welcomes new ones, and allows the eye to register a maximum number of sensations in a given time. How important this is in everyday life is seen, for example, in reading, when the images of between 40 and 80 letters may be presented to the brain in each second; if this feat is to be accomplished with any success, the very rapid preparation of the retina for each new image becomes absolutely essential."<sup>25</sup>

The phenomenon of successive contrast pertains to the persistence of vision part of the theory of illusory film movement. We can say that our persisting vision sustains an image not despite or irrespective of the intervening blackout, but because of that blackout. The emphasis is obviously different.

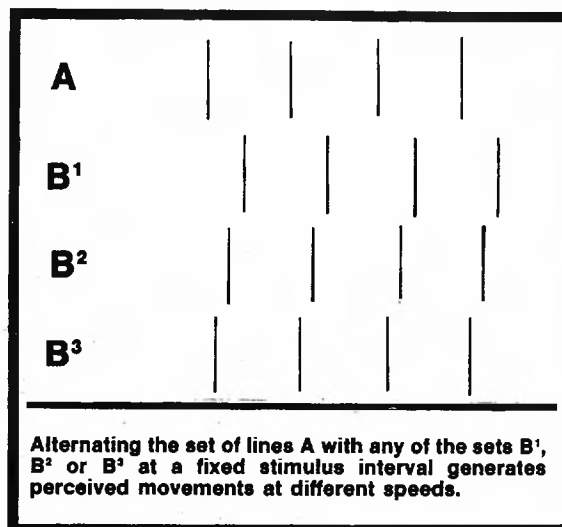
Another probable effect of the blackout that we can examine is increased sensitivity of the retina to subsequent stimulation. We have seen that the retina welcomes new images and stimuli. There is evidence to suggest that during the blackout between images, there is an instant increase in the sensitivity of the retina, which is called scopic, or dark-adapted, vision. The increase in sensitivity to light can be calculated, but only up to a point, for it has been found that the sensitivity of the fovea increases so rapidly during the first few seconds of dark adaptation that it cannot be measured. The curve of the following graph, showing dark adaptation at the fovea, provides us with some evidence that even a time interval as brief as 1/48th second is adequate for scopic vision to occur.<sup>26</sup>

Since the retina becomes more sensitive to light in the darkness, then the lamp in the projector need not burn as brightly. This means much more than a small saving on the electricity bill, for the phi phenomena is more easily experienced using illuminations of a lower intensity than a higher. Although the projector bulb is a source of brilliant light, too bright for the

naked eye, much of this light is absorbed by the cinema screen and the distance over which it is projected.

Some mention should be made of projection of film at speeds other than at 24 frames per second. Other speeds used are 25, 18 and 16 f.p.s. 24 and 18 are the most common in use, being for 16mm and 8mm stock respectively. In each of the four speeds the rate of f.p.s. quite obviously satisfies the conditions for CFF to occur.

Although little is known about the velocity of objects in apparent motion, including the lower limiting value of speed of an illusory motion, the following simple test<sup>27</sup> can help us to understand how we can see not only film movement at natural, or veridical, speed, but also slow motion, accelerated motion (as in Charlie Chaplin films) and other variations:



The diagram is used as follows: "Let the lines of A be the first flash and any of the sets in the remaining rows be the second. A very great range of speeds can be seen at a single inter-stimulus interval when the different sets are displayed. Slow speeds are seen when the distances separating the lines are small, and faster when they are larger."<sup>28</sup> That is, A flashed, then B¹ flashed might represent the speed of movement of a character in a Keystone Kops film; A then B² normal speed of movement, and A then B³ slow motion. Although interstimulus interval, or projection speed, does range from 16 to 25 frames per second, the above diagram is very useful for

explaining how the different movements are experienced.

From the above discussion it can be seen that the inadequacy of the persistence of vision theory of film movement should have been generally known to the film world a long time ago, in view of the work of Exner, Wertheimer, Münsterberg and many others. While Kolers notes that a truly comprehensive account of illusory movement is not yet available, exploration of some of the retinal and perceptual processes results in at least a better understanding of the phenomenon.

Why has the persistence of vision theory persisted, with its dignity intact, for so long? Perhaps one reason is that Exner's discovery in 1875 attracted little interest until Wertheimer's experiments in 1910. Between these two dates the motion picture projector and the motion picture camera were invented. The Thaumatrope and other optical toys had for a very long time been understood in terms of persistence of vision, so presumably the film illusion was included in the general collection of optical gadgets being used at the time. It is a plausible theory, because it can explain why we see no darkness where there is darkness, and somehow it has been handed down from generation to generation. The prevalence of the phenomenon might also indicate some sort of separation, or dissociation, within the Humanities, keeping film study, physiology and psychology apart. For example, neither the University of Sydney nor the Australian National University have film study courses, but have departments of psychology. Those universities that have shown breadth and maturity of understanding of their own courses, by offering film study, might include some study of how the illusion of movement is created, if they do not do so already.★

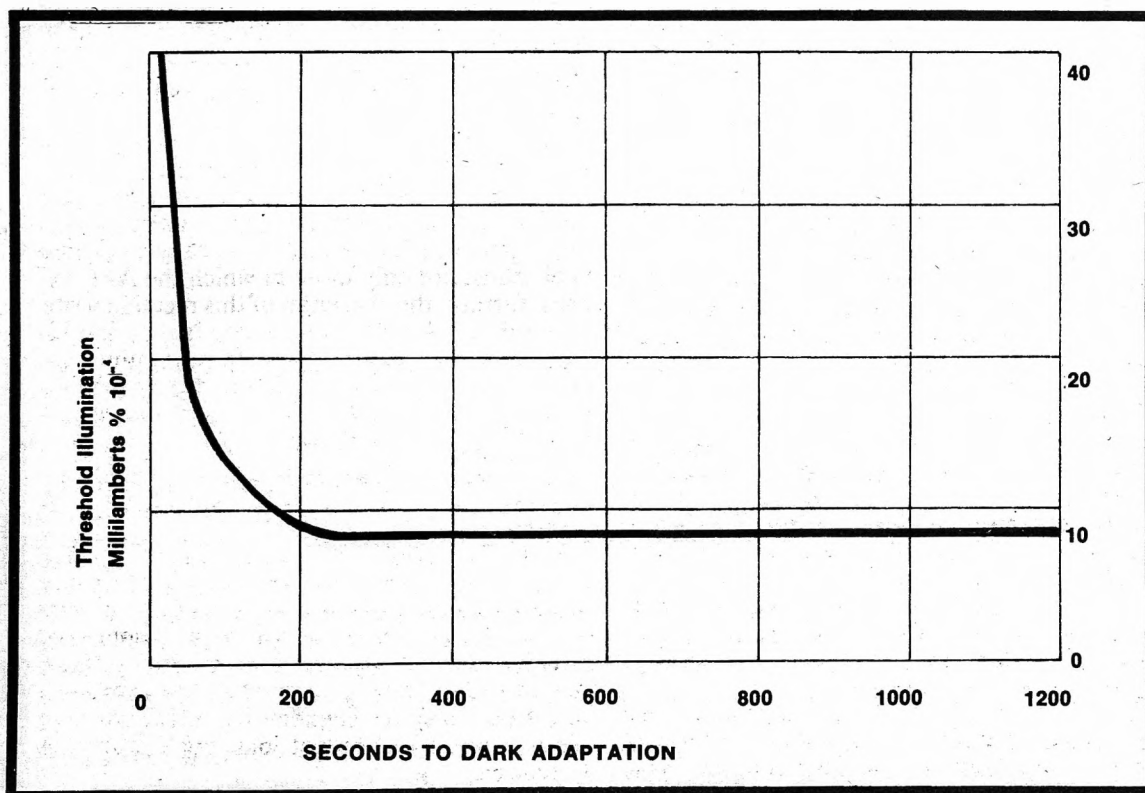
The author wishes to thank Dr. Ian Curthoys and his colleagues of the Department of Psychology, University of Sydney, for their helpful suggestions, and Miss Gail Pascoe, of Goulburn College of Advanced Education, for the graphic material.

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I hereby apply for Associate membership of the Australian Film Institute and enclose \$5 (cheque/money order) being membership fee covering the period to 30 June 1977.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Samuel Z. Arkoff

Continued from P. 217

Roger had moved back and forth all the time. He had gone to do some films with Columbia and then got fired from one of them because he wouldn't do it the way they wanted it done. He also made a few for UA. He had set up his own distribution company, Film Group, and then decided he didn't want it, so he thrust it on to us.

Even after he started New World Pictures he still made films for us, when he got himself into a budget bracket he thought was over his limit. For example, *Box Car Bertha*, which was Scorsese's first film, and *Bloody Mama*, with Robert de Niro.

**Do you think the direction Corman's taking at the moment with New World resembles the line you were following in the fifties?**

Well, Roger claims that he is the largest independent and that we are a major now. I take issue with him on that and say that I always was and still am an independent, and he will have to be content with second place.

**Jim Nicholson left the company just before he died and set up Academy Productions...**

Well, none of us knew it at the time but I think that what really happened with Jim was that he was ill and it all just became too much for him. I think he wanted to get away from us so as not to cause us any grief.

**What effect do you think the acquisition by Roadshow of Warner's franchise has had on your relationship?**

I don't think it has had any effect.

**And yet it would have been true to say that up until that time every AIP film that went out in Australia went out through Roadshow. Now AIP have films in release through Seven Keys and Filmways as well...**

There have been various reasons for that, but Roadshow is our distributor and we are really happy with them. They are by far the best people to handle AIP product here. We even discussed with them the possibility of co-productions. I think I could work with Tim Burstall on a horror film here for example.

**Is the elimination of tax shelters in the U.S. going to create a product shortage? And if so, would that mean you might be more interested in doing co-productions?**

We have always been involved in co-productions. We have a British company, and we have co-produced with almost every film company in the world. The tax shelter knockout will have some effect, but I don't think this will be quite as disastrous as some people have said.

Even though almost the entire package of new AIP films going out at the moment are tax sheltered or have tax shelter money in them...

Look, as long as it was available, we used it. As a result of tax shelter financing I didn't have to use any of my bank financing, which has remained virtually untouched over the past couple of years. So I am not really concerned. In the film business things are never as good as they seem and never as bad as they seem.

**What sort of ground rules do you think should apply as far as material for co-productions with Australian producers is concerned?**

I think the Australian film industry is making substantial progress, but that doesn't mean to say you would go from swaddling clothes into a Gucci outfit overnight. It took us 22 years.

I would caution you: make your films for the home market and avoid the esoteric and the arty-farty.

**Would you put a film like "Picnic at Hanging Rock" in that category?**

I consider it a well-produced film that moves at a pace I would not consider commercial enough throughout the world. I kept expecting something to happen, but it never did. But I know that *Picnic at Hanging Rock* did well here and I am delighted.

**You've never made a practice, as Roger Corman has lately, of handling some foreign releases like "Amarcord" and "Cries and Whispers", along with the bread and butter films...**

Well, one guy got Roger into that. Roger denies that it's really interesting for him, but deep down I think he likes the prestige and the 'reputation'. But then in this business, of course, everyone's a rogue — except myself, naturally. Mind you, I love rogues. ★

## Book Review

Continued from P. 279

But the big plus for Bowers' book is the pages it devotes to the Selznick stock company — a stable of actors and actresses he had under personal contract in the forties. Here for the first time are detailed appreciations of such neglected actors as Dorothy McGuire, Gregory Peck, Joseph Cotten and Joan Fontaine, all with extensive filmographies. In addition there are the reliables: Ingrid Bergman, Shirley Temple and Vivien Leigh.

In a number of appendices Bowers sketches briefly the careers of some of the Selznick also-rans like Rory Calhoun, Guy Madison and Hildegard Knef, as well as listing awards to the Selznick company and players and listing their top grossing films.

Selznick died in 1965, and in tribute to his powers of organization Joseph Cotten said in eulogy: "I cannot help but think that our world will never be the same — nor will heaven. And if we are lucky enough to get there too, David will see that all the arrangements are made." ★





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